

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER
MODEL THAT EMPOWERS MINISTRY
LEADERS FOR SERVICE

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ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER MODEL THAT EMPOWERS MINISTRY LEADERS FOR SERVICE

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The purpose of this project was to train ministry leaders at Canaan Baptist Church of New Castle, Delaware. The project not only empowered leaders to serve, but participants developed valuable skills in intercessory prayer. The hypothesis is that if ministry leaders learn to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, then they will become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to serve as ministry leaders. Testing this hypothesis used the qualitative method of pre- and post-training questionnaires, focused homework, and observations from leading in prayer. The results indicated that the participants felt empowered to serve as leaders.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The word of God tells us that we were chosen before the foundation of world (Eph. 1:4), and that we are called according to his purpose (Rom. 8:28-30). This work helped me to clearly move toward my destiny and purpose according to the will of God for my life. Therefore, I first accredit this work to the work of the Holy Spirit that prepared, equipped, and empowered me spiritually to embark on this theological journey for a greater work yet to come in the body of Christ to empower ministry leaders through intercessory prayer for service in the Kingdom of God.

There were many people along the way that God used to help and inspire me to stay on task, to finish with excellence, and to remain focused on who is doing the calling, and who is doing the work in me. I give thanks to my husband, Alfred Lloyd Coleman, Jr., who has become my partner along this journey, my support system covering me through very difficult times, and my friend whom I am forever grateful for his patience in keeping things together while I focused on this work.

During this journey, I have come across many scholars and theologians in this work that provided key insights into the historical and contemporary Black church leading me to where I serve today. Although this list is not all inclusive, I first give special thanks to my pastor, Rev. Dr. Christopher Alan Bullock of Canaan Baptist Church of Delaware who accepted me into his sheepfold, mentored me, and inspired me to lead

in many areas in serving the mission of the church. He believed in me when I often did not believe in myself. He also provided significant support in writing this dissertation.

I would also like to give a special thanks to Dr. Dexter Cannon, my mentor at United Theological Seminary who ensured that all students under his leadership would be successful in completing the requirements for the program. He defined, taught, and displayed examples of what is meant by being an innovative leader. His leadership style gave great insights into the intricacies of building leaders for effective change. The teachings have advanced and sharpened my thinking on innovative leadership in many ways.

Finally, I give thanks to all my faculty consultants, professional associates, family, and friends that helped me in this journey through moral support, through encouraging words, and prayer. It does take a village to raise great leaders, and to those that came along side me to help, thank you.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this doctoral dissertation to Rev. Dr. Christopher Alan Bullock, his wife Dr. Debbie Bullock, and to my church family at Canaan Baptist Church of Delaware. Their gifts of leadership, wisdom, support, prayer, and the many words of encouragements from my church family inspired me to stay the course, reach higher, and go deeper into what God wants for the Church today.

To God be the glory for the things He has done.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most underutilized spiritual disciplines as a source of empowerment for ministry is the practice of intercessory prayer. Canaan Baptist Church of New Castle, Delaware demonstrates continued success in membership growth with over forty ministries serving the church and surrounding communities. However, with steady growth, redundancies across ministries became apparent introducing resource challenges, complacency, and leadership burnout. Although the implementation of several leadership models streamlined ministry programming and reduced redundancy, it was not enough to empower ministry leaders to move beyond self-sufficiency and tap into the divine source that will enable them to remain steadfast in fulfilling the mission of the church as ordained by God. Therefore, this research project, “The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service,” supports how the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer can engage the Holy Spirit as the source of receiving divine empowerment for serving in ministry. The investigative study building the foundation for this ministry project attempts to affirm the hypothesis that if ministry leaders will learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, then they will become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to lead in ministry. In light of this, the framework for the project structure is to develop, implement, and measure the results of the study through pre- and post-training questionnaires, active

participation, and observation. The following chapters delineate the foundational research supporting this ministry project.

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, examines how my spiritual journey led to having a sense of urgency and desire to develop an intercessory prayer model for ministry leaders. Taking into consideration my spiritual journey with analysis of the needs of the context, this chapter further defines how my spiritual journey synergistically aligns with the needs of the context, thereby establishing the basis for the theme of this ministry project on how intercessory prayer empowers ministry leaders for service.

Chapter two, biblical foundation, explicates selected biblical narratives to support how intercessory prayer equipped and empowered a community of believers to witness the good news of the gospel. The primary New Testament scripture is Acts 4:23-31 and relates to a community of believers who petitioned God in prayer to speak the gospel boldly. God answered their prayers by outpouring his Spirit on the place where they prayed. They were all filled and spoke with great boldness. The supporting New Testament scripture is Matthew 21:12-14, where Jesus cleansed the temple and declared the temple to be a house of prayer. Together, these New Testament scriptures present the biblical foundation that intercessory prayer should be a vital part of the ministry and mission of the church.

Chapter three, historical foundation, engages the historical figure Charles Gradison Finney to establish the foundation that prayer facilitates receiving the outpouring of the Spirit that equipped and empowered him for ministry. Finney established that “no one at any time has a right to expect success in ministry unless he first secures power from on high.” Finney, however, became the instrument that God

used to demonstrate the importance of the church to become a house of prayer as a prerequisite for the release of the Holy Spirit to provide transformative power for witnessing and ministry. The conclusion drawn from this historical foundation is that the ministry of prayer and the Holy Spirit's empowerment are essential elements for ministry effectiveness. The life application examples provided in this historical foundation will enhance and affirm how intercessory prayer transforms and revives communities, which will be instrumental in developing the framework for the training material.

Chapter four, theological foundation, introduces the Practical Theology of ministry regarding how the human spirit connects with the Spirit of God using Jesus' ministry as an example of how, why, and to whom we answer in ministry. Secondly, this chapter also introduces the empirical component of Practical Theology to build on the theological foundation for how prayer equips and empowers believers for service through the empowerment of the Spirit of God. Thirdly, it comparatively defines how intercessory prayer is different from other types of prayers and how intercessory prayer leads to a divine connection with the Spirit of God, and what it means to stand in the breach on behalf of others.

Chapter five, interdisciplinary foundation, provides the interdisciplinary foundation on the social scientific study of prayer by exploring the discipline of communication in presenting prayer as a form of spiritual communication. Secondly, this chapter introduces various forms of spiritual communication and expressions of prayer and provides a literal illustration of the attributes of spiritual communication involving hearing and listening to God in a relational dialogue. Thirdly, this chapter also provides

the supporting foundation that God still speaks to His people today through various means.

Chapter six, project analysis, outlines the process and details the methodology used to capture the data supporting the project hypothesis. It will further explicate the study results to affirm the validity of prayer for empowerment in ministry. This concluding chapter will also provide details on the training materials and incorporate documented assessments of all participants through visual observations, homework assignments, and prayer journal entries.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

This chapter will introduce how my ministry journey and skills converge with the needs of the ministry context. The focus will reveal and discuss the relationship between the two, which will form the basis for the ministry focus of my project. There were several needs identified within the context. However, I desired to articulate the overarching need that I believe to be leadership empowerment through consistent participation in the ministry of intercessory prayer. Furthermore, this chapter will also develop a theme statement and hypothesis on which I will build my Doctor of Ministry project.

Context

Canaan Baptist Church is not just a Sunday morning, open for service church; it is a church in operation seven days a week serving the community. Canaan is a member of the NBC USA, Inc., one of the nation's largest Black Baptist denominations. Canaan is predominantly a Black Baptist church driven by Liberation Theology, considered multiethnic, represented by several nationalities, and accepts all people. All who walk into Canaan Baptist Church, a smile from representatives of the Greeters Ministry awaits them at the entrance. As people enter the sanctuary, praise opens the door, worship draws

them into the presence of God, and the Holy Spirit invites them to stay awhile, to go deeper, to reach higher, and receive a blessing from the worship experience. The charismatic-type worship makes Canaan a non-traditional Black Baptist Church, which inspired me to move beyond my past biases in the Baptist denomination to an experience that invigorates and ministers to my spiritual needs. Additionally, Canaan offers a place to experience the move of God freely. It extends an invitation to participate in the various ministries to serve God. It encourages all to help build bridges from the church to the community to facilitate building healthy, spirit-filled communities.

The location of the church was strategically built in an area that offers easy access to assess the needs of the community and provides an opportunity to combat and transform the socio-economic problems of poverty, crime, and oppression. The senior pastor expressed why the location was strategically chosen, “instead of avoiding some of the community’s problems, the Black church must do all it can to embrace its community.”¹ As with many urban communities, this area of New Castle County could benefit from economic development, providing opportunities for the transformation of the underutilized land and properties into businesses that will pour back into the community by providing jobs to reduce the unemployment rate as well as building affordable housing to young families. This location functions as the area's main thoroughfare providing access within a five-mile radius to major expressways linking Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland. This means that people can easily travel to attend Canaan from any of the metropolitan areas.

¹ "Delaware Minister Calls for Black Churches to Step It Up," Foote Communications, <http://www.neilfoote.com/delaware-minister-calls-for-black-churches-to-step-it-up/>.

Canaan Baptist Church exhibits momentous strengths in serving the community upholding its mission intrinsically. Their mission is “to do ministry for the Master through the five-fold ministries of discipleship, fellowship, service, worship and evangelism” based on Acts 2:42-47. Each ministry adopts one or more of the core values to incorporate the ministry’s mission with the church’s mission building the biblical foundation for each. The core values of Canaan are “congregational intimacy based on 1 Corinthians 13:13; salvation for the lost based on John 3:16; applied Christianity based on James 2:14-20; impact the human condition based on Luke 4:18-19.”² The senior pastor, Rev. Christopher A. Bullock, established these core values as a framework supporting the mission as he believes that “it is in the work of the church that fulfills the mission and mandate of Jesus Christ.”³

Upon joining Canaan in 2013, there were twenty-eight associate ministers with various backgrounds and experiences serving as associate ministers to the senior pastor. In 2019, this number decreased slightly to twenty-two associate ministers (eleven female and eleven male ministers), mainly due to natural causes. Many of the associate ministers are leaders in several of the forty plus ministries listed in the directory of ministries, and if not leading in one of those ministries, they are leading in service in other areas. Ministers have the opportunity to participate in the Sunday morning worship services, lead and preach in the worship services in the event the pastor is absent, and preach

² Canaan Baptist Church New Castle Delaware, "Canaan Baptist Church Home," Canaan Baptist Church New Castle Delaware, <https://www.canaanbcde.org>.

³ Scribd, "Canaan Baptist Church - January 2015 Newsletter - Web Edition," Scribd, <https://www.scribd.com/document/260190361/Canaan-Baptist-Church-January-2015-Newsletter-Web-Edition>.

during the worship on Wednesday's fellowship/Bible study. There are great opportunities to develop in ministry at Canaan as the pastor is supportive of mentoring his leaders.

Although Canaan has demonstrated success in membership growth with over forty ministries serving the church and community, this became problematic due to redundancies spread across ministries, challenges in available resources, and leadership burnout. This is not uncommon, because from experience in the Baptist denomination many ministry leaders often express concerns that the same people are always carrying the weight of the church on their shoulders. Therefore, the senior pastor instituted the *Simple Church*⁴ model "to gravitate from church work to the work of the church in order to have maximum impact in the church and the community."⁵ The *Simple Church* model reduced much of the redundancy and assisted in streamlining ministry events and programming through ministry leadership collaboration. However, it was not enough to empower ministry leaders to persevere beyond the leadership challenges to become more effective and steadfast in accomplishing the church's overall mission.

Prior to joining the church, Canaan required all ministry leaders to participate in ministry leadership training held offsite every year in a retreat-like setting over an extended weekend. This training introduced leaders to the pastor's vision for the year. It provided opportunities to learn of the church's mission and core values. It helped ministry leaders prepare specific goals and provided advice on how to work with other ministry

⁴ Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church: Returning to Gods Process for Making Disciples* (Nashville, TN: B and H Pub. Group, 2011), 3.

⁵ Scribd, "Canaan Baptist Church," <https://www.scribd.com/document/260190361/Canaan-Baptist-Church-January-2015-Newsletter-Web-Edition>.

leaders. This training was inspirational and encouraging to many in leadership roles as the collaborative training facilitated a sense of community amongst the leadership team.

Sometime in 2015, Canaan replaced this training method with a more simplified method using the Ministry Action Plan (MAP) leadership form followed by monthly meetings to help ministry leaders define yearly goals, list out monthly programming, and prepare and submit budgets. Additionally, the senior pastor provided periodic visits at the leadership meetings to encourage and enforce his vision going forward. Furthermore, the senior pastor ensures that all his leaders keep abreast of the political climate and crises in our nation and those that may arise within our communities. He often talks about ministry today requires the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in another. The leadership team would often receive recommended readings of various voices on the current and historical state of the Black church. Coming from a predominantly White church and community, these recommended readings were paramount in providing an aerial view of the landscape on ministering in urban communities. The senior pastor is an example of a great leader that prepares his team for responding to the signs of the times.

With the continued rapid growth in membership increasing leadership responsibilities to prepare for the harvest, Canaan must revisit the need to implement a ministry leadership training program that not only equips, but a training program that will help leaders grow spiritually and one that will empower them to serve. Consider the leadership model of Moses. Moses, being a great Patriarch of the Old Testament, became the extension of God's hand to lead the people out of Egypt (Exod. 3:12). Called as a type of undershepherd, God equipped Moses with a staff to carry out his mission to lead the people (Exod. 4:2). Notably, the staff alone had no power, but it was the power of

God moving in the staff that equipped and empowered Moses with the supernatural power needed to lead God's people.⁶ Leaders need to be Spirit-led to lead the people, and the staff God gives us today to engage the Holy Spirit is intercessory prayer. Robert K. Greenleaf, summarizes well this affirmation of a Spirit-led leader:

Spirit directs the leader when the going gets rough, uncertain, or hazardous and gives strength and assurance to the less hardy. Spirit sustains the leader in long, depressing periods when things are not going well. Spirit armors the leader for the stress of crisis and the unexpected. Spirit is an aspect of inner strength.⁷

Canaan demonstrates in service to the community their desire for God to heal the land and send the Pentecost. Most importantly, it is a desire for God to bring revival to the church and transform the communities of Delaware. This desire is sung at the close of every service, preceding the benediction is a congregational, contemporary song entitled "*Heal The Land*" based on 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NSRV) "if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." The structural transition of the song formulating the bridge is the declaration that "*God said He would heal the land, so send the Pentecost.*" The desire for God to send the Pentecost as depicted in Acts 2 is a heart-felt desire for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a means to spread renewal in the Church through the new covenant people enabling them to operate in the fullness of the gifts of the Spirit. There is definitely a need and a desire for Canaan to experience revival that will transform our communities.

⁶ Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology, vol. 20 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 87.

⁷ Robert K. Greenleaf, Anne T. Fraker, and Larry C. Spears, *Seeker and Servant: Reflections on Religious Leadership*, 1st ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 125.

The biblical text informs us that many were devoted to prayer prior to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:14). The historical text informs us that the Pentecostal movement of the twentieth century instituted by prayer of a church led by Pastor William Joseph Seymour marked a period of remarkable spiritual encounters, increased church attendance crossing denominational lines and ethnic groups, unprecedented developments of organizations for the advancement of the gospel, and people developed an earnestness in Christian devotion and prayer.⁸ Although Canaan is doing a great job in serving the community with demonstrated growth with over forty plus ministries, there is not a ministry dedicated to prayer where leaders can develop the skills for engaging consistently in intercessory prayer enhancing their relationship between God and his leaders.

Ministry Journey

In my elementary years as a child, finding solace in the cares of life impacted by domestic violence led me on a spiritual journey seeking God for answers to prayers. As a result of seeking God through prayer, I was able to rise above life struggles by responding in faith and obedience to the voice of God. Consistently, God instructed me to look to the Spirit and be led by the Spirit in all things. The practice of seeking God daily and diligently obeying God's voice led to transformative spiritual growth that developed into an intimate relationship with God. Journaling became the therapy I needed for emotional and spiritual healing. As I grew spiritually, the ministry of prayer became my daily practice.

⁸ Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2012), 2.

Adjacent to my spiritual journey, there have been shifts between church denominations over the years that played a vital role in my ministry journey. Notably, the Black Baptist Church was the foundation on which my Christian journey began. However, after several years of attending Second Baptist Church, we realized the church did not meet the needs of our young family. The church did not offer a separate worship service for children. This stifled the spiritual growth of our family as we spent most of the service disciplining the children to settle down during service. We became bored and then drifted away from fellowship.

We began to look for a church where we could spiritually grow as a family. We were led to Life Christian Fellowship, an Assemblies of God church located in Springfield, Pennsylvania. After our first visit, we immediately observed the differences in the worship experience compared to the Baptist experience. We attended the church several times before joining. This church introduced us to the Pentecostal style of praise and worship, home cell group Bible studies, and evangelistic outreach events that involved the entire family. It embraced the diversity of various ethnic groups. I served in various ministries aspiring into leadership responsibilities such as the Communications Ministry, launching an Intercessory Prayer Ministry, and I had an opportunity to travel to Tijuana, Mexico for missions. I continued to grow spiritually with dedicated Bible study, intercessory prayer, and journaling. It was a common practice for me to steal away from a busy day to spend time in prayer.

This time alone in prayer became the guiding light in my ministry journey. One day in particular led me to read James 1:5. From this reading, I earnestly wanted to obtain this wisdom as introduced by James. One Saturday afternoon, a friend invited me to

attend a revival service. To my surprise, the message was on James 1:5. At the end of his message, he extended an invitation to those who desired wisdom to come to the altar. Well, that altar call was for me. However, I remained in my seat and continued to pray quietly. I very much desired wisdom and maturity but was afraid to come forward. Several individuals made their way to the altar as the pastor prayed over each one individually. At the end of the prayer, he acknowledged there was still another that had not come forth. Once again, he continued to extend the invitation to come forward. He stepped down from the pulpit and moved into the congregation. Moving to the back of the church and then walking forward again stopping directly at the pew where I sat. The pastor reached over several people, pulled me out into the aisle, and took me to the altar for prayer. I felt the power of God come over me in such a way that I fell on my knees and wept with an overwhelming feeling of joy that God heard my silent prayers and acknowledged them openly. How could this be, I thought to myself, sitting in a crowded church God chose me from the crowd to impart wisdom into my life.

Reflecting on my ministry journey through the years, I can unequivocally say that the call into ministry was in 2000 when I said, "Yes, Lord, I will go for you." With my positive response of yes, God led the way. Little by little, God began to use me through assignments in intercessory prayer, assignments in targeted giving, assignments in serving, and in many other ways. I felt a nudging toward something, but I did not know the "what." Each day the assignments would expand into larger assignments. In July of 2000, I never envisioned God would call me to develop the Steppin' for Christ outreach ministry for children and youth in the community. Why me, I thought to myself, as I have absolutely no experience in working with children nor did I have the knowledge of how

to evangelize children. However, I yielded to this call. God took this willingness to be obedient and developed a passion in me to launch this ministry. I started with the ministry out of my home with approximately fifteen youth in attendance. Then expanded to a rented facility in the community with other adults assisting.

This ministry experienced an unusual influx of children, youth, and young adults attending the weekly fellowship, then requiring expansion to a rented facility in the community with other adults assisting. Each week on Friday evenings, the leaders had an opportunity to minister to over 180 children from the surrounding communities, teaching them the gospel, counseling them, and helping them to grow spiritually in their relationship with God. After one year of the ministry launch, it became a 501(c)(3) non-profit community outreach organization for children and youth located in Media, Pennsylvania, serving the Delaware Valley. Interesting to note, the meeting place for the ministry was located within two blocks of the Baptist church I had left some years prior.

After thirteen years of serving at Life Christian Fellowship, God moved me back to my denominational roots in the Black Baptist Church in Media, Pennsylvania, where I served in several leadership positions. This is where I received my license to minister in 2005 as an Evangelist leading Christian Education, Vacation Bible School, Women's Ministry, establishing the Foreign Missions ministry, and serving as Associate Minister to the Pastor. Sometime after receiving a license to minister the gospel, I enrolled in undergraduate studies at Eastern School of Christian Education (ESCM). After completion of these undergraduate studies, my academic journey led me to enroll in the Master of Divinity program in 2011 at Palmer Theological Seminary. Seminary took me

to another level on this educational journey. I did not feel that I was there for the degree, but I felt I was there for the equipping.

After several years of attending Palmer Theological Seminary as a part-time student, my Christian educational studies provided opportunities to take a grad class abroad in the Holy Land at Jerusalem University College in Israel. After the successful completion of the short-term study on the Historical and Geographical Settings of the Bible,⁹ I graduated from Palmer Theological Seminary in 2016 with a Master's in Theological Studies. In February of that same year, I published my first book, *Robbing Peter to Paul is Bondage: A 40-Day Journey to Financial Stability*. A self-help workbook on how to allow God to provide wisdom and discernment in managing finances leading to financial stability.¹⁰ My struggle to tithe ten percent of total income resulted in a journey to trust God with my finances. Thus, through prayer, God instructed me to take a forty-day spending fast, and He would show me that I had more than enough to tithe. I took the journey, and the contents of the book were from journal extracts of written prayers and answers to prayers through the leading of the Holy Spirit resulting in significant financial breakthroughs. During this forty-day journey, God freed up more than ten percent enabling me to tithe without a struggle. Once again, prayer leads to spiritual breakthroughs. It was fascinating to learn in this entire process that when I let God manage my spending, wealth was not necessary.

⁹ Jerusalem University College, *Historical and Geographical Settings of the Bible*, <http://www.juc.edu>.

¹⁰ Anita Michelle Coleman, *Robbing Peter to Pay Paul Is Bondage: A Forty-Day Journey to Developing Wisdom toward Financial Stability* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2016), ii.

Just before graduating from Palmer Theological Seminary, my ministry journey led me to join Canaan Baptist Church where I currently serve as the Director of Women's Ministry, Sunday school teacher for pre-school children, assist on the Pastoral Leadership Team, and serve as Associate Minister under the leadership of the senior pastor. The ministry at Canaan has become the place of ministry growth and development where God has inspired me to be diligent in prayer while serving in various ministries. The Women's Ministry has grown to become a vibrant ministry in the church with demonstrated evidence of women growing in fellowship with one another moving to serve in other ministries of the church. As a leader of the Women's Ministry, we had an opportunity to host three retreats with over 250 women in attendance. The revival experience spilled over into the Sunday morning worship services each Sunday for more than two weeks after the retreat. The women exhibited extended periods of worship where they were speaking in tongues, some slain in the spirit, and the First Lady testified of healing. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit resulted from the continued daily prayers over the Women's Ministry for eight months prior to the retreats. God showed me a few years ago, that Canaan would expand to become the community church of New Castle, Delaware. I continue to pray each day at 4:30 am, covering all areas of the ministry of Canaan, the community, and those who come to mind.

At every crossroad of this ministry journey, Philippians 1:6 became one of the guiding principles that humbled me to persevere in this journey. God often reminded and assured me, "that the one who began a good work in me will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). The "good work" that God has begun in me at a young age is the ministry of intercessory prayer that continues to lead to evangelistic

opportunities to serve with power through the manifestations of the Holy Spirit as the enabler. This ministry journey prepared me spiritually and formally through educational development for this calling to produce an intercessory prayer model for the Baptist denomination with Canaan Baptist Church being the context for this study.

Develop the Synergy

Intercessory prayer has become the conduit that connected me to the voice of God, equipped me to respond to the call into ministry, and empowered me to persevere beyond my natural abilities to serve as a leader to advance the kingdom of God. The relationship of my spiritual journey with that of the context's needs will form the basis of this project. Based on the need identified in the context of empowering leaders to persevere beyond leadership challenges, it is my desire to extract from my spiritual journey how the foundational principles of intercessory prayer will continually equip and empower ministry leaders to accomplish the mission of the context.

As we know, the church is a living organism and anything that is alive grows. One of the strengths of the context is that they do ministry well when it comes to addressing the socioeconomic and spiritual needs of the community resulting in significant membership growth in a very short timeframe. That, of course, is a very good quality to have, especially when we see many churches today on the decline. Therefore, because of this exponential growth, it is not only necessary to recruit additional leaders to avoid burnout, but it is essential to prepare and equip all ministry leaders to receive the abundant harvest. A vital component necessary for sustainability in preparing and equipping leaders is empowerment. Empowerment training will teach ministry leaders to

teach themselves how to persevere when faced with challenges. From a spiritual perspective, empowerment in ministry is through direct communication with God and that is intercessory prayer. This is key to all ministry leadership training models. Why? Because the word of God tells us to “ask the Lord of the harvest” (Matt. 9:38).

To illustrate what it means to empower for sustainability, the book *Superleadership: Teaching Others to Teach Themselves*, provides a very good example in this analogy, “give a man a fish, he will be fed for a day; teach a man to fish, he will be fed for a lifetime.”¹¹ As ministry leaders, we inherit the role to teach others that they may spiritually grow and become leaders themselves. If we as leaders try to carry everything on our shoulders singlehandedly, then we will send the wrong message and many that follow will not aspire to become efficient leaders. The authors further exemplify the principle of “teach, “Be a strong, even charismatic leader and followers will know where to go as long as you light the way. Teach them to lead themselves and their path will be lighted always.”¹² From a biblical perspective, Matthew 28:19-20 says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ...teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.” As ministry leaders, we are called to lead by example, to be a light to others that we may have an influence into the lives of others. When we lead by example with a solid foundation of biblical principles, others will follow our example and give light to others, for God said, “let light so shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6).” Intercessory prayer helps us to remain humbled as we recognize our weaknesses,

¹¹ Charles C. Manz and Henry P. Sims, *Superleadership: Teaching Others to Teach Themselves* (San Francisco, CA: Berkley Books, 1990), 1.

¹² Manz, *Superleadership*, 28.

shortcomings and the need for God's empowerment to complete the assignments given to us.

Intercessory prayer can move you from serving in the natural to serving in the supernatural. Operating in the supernatural means that God will perform signs and wonders through you without you having to do anything except be available. Each morning I pray for the harvest. One morning stands out where God used me to save a young girl from committing suicide. God assured me in prayer that He would send someone to me that day. Being attentive to opportunities to serve, I was traveling by car on the way home from work where I encountered a teenage girl approximately twenty to twenty-two years old walking between moving cars on a very busy, multi-lane highway. She was walking deliberately against moving cars. Several cars passed by or moved out of the way to avoid hitting her. One car after another swerved around her, and no one stopped to offer help. The traffic light turned red. My car was stopped in the center lane behind several cars, with traffic all around, I immediately asked God if this girl was my assignment and waited for the leading of the Holy Spirit. God said, "Yes, the girl was my assignment." However, I was to remain in my car that he would bring her to me. Also, God instructed not to receive her into my car, but I was to instruct her to walk to the corner where I would receive her. Immediately after God's instruction, the girl walked past several cars until she approached my car. She knocked on the window and asked, "Will you help me!" Responding to the promptings by the Holy Spirit, I instructed her to walk over to safety on to the side road at the corner and that I would meet her there. She agreed to walk to the corner. After the light turned green, I was then able to meet her at the corner where I embraced her in prayer. She latched on to me with a cry for help. I

spoke into her spirit with a message of hope and God's love for her life. I stayed with her until someone picked her up. Before leaving, she reached back with a hug and whispered, "I'm going to be all right. Thank you for helping me." This encounter not only saved her life, but it also changed the way she felt about life.

This was a good example of direct communication with the Holy Spirit, which alludes to prayer without ceasing that produced life-changing experiences for both of us. God invites this intimate fellowship with him so that at times like these he can operate through us to perform great works to complete his will on earth. Considering that thought, intercessory prayer offers limitless possibilities for serving with the help of the Holy Spirit such as divine interventions, healings, prophetic prayers releasing God's will in targeted area, and so much more. Although the context currently does not have a ministry dedicated to prayer, indeed, prayer is part of the culture of the church, practiced corporately before and during worship services, and practiced individually, primarily by those who pray for the sick and shut-in, for example. However, intercessory prayer is direct communication with God, and it moves beyond the basic prayer model to a sacrificial method of prayer by standing in the gap on behalf of another person, for the church, community, and perhaps the nation as God directs and leads. Intercessory prayer provides the divine intervention to unlock and release the will of God for ministry, which is necessary for ministering to the harvest of today.

Undoubtedly, the Bible tells us that all believers are to engage in all forms of prayer, with intercession being one of several types of prayer mentioned, "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone" (2 Tim. 2:1). From the many prayers listed by Paul, intercession introduces

some unique attributes that stand out from the more common types of prayers, such as intercessors develop intimacy with God; they pray daily for long periods, pray with more intensity, often experience answers to prayers, and pray with great assurance and faith in hearing from God to name just a few. Intercessory prayer is not one of the spiritual gifts, but it is a spiritual discipline that matures over time when practiced daily with a desire to answer the call to pray.¹³ Leading in ministry can be exhaustive work as demonstrated in Jesus' ministry where he often stepped away to a quiet place to pray to hear from his Father (Luke 5:16). In many of those times away in prayer, the burden of standing in the gap for the people became overbearing for Jesus. There were times where Jesus prayed with great intensity for God to take away the burden of fulfilling his mission, "In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground" (Luke 22:44). Although there are many more New Testament examples on how Jesus prayed, these two passages undeniably depict a clear distinction between the basic forms of prayer and that of intercession.

Regarding empowerment for service, let us consider a few Old Testament biblical narratives that emphatically demonstrate the power of intercessory prayer through intimacy with God. Biblical history tells us that Moses had an intimate relationship with God, unlike any other prophet in which God spoke to him face-to-face and God entrusted Moses with all his house (Num. 12:6-8). Moses' intimacy with God was so great that the favor of God fell upon Moses in such a way that God considered Moses to be "one who beholds the form of the Lord" (Num. 12:8b). Later in the narratives, Israel kindled God's anger against them, and God's wrath was to come upon the people, but Moses' prayer

¹³ C. Peter Wagner, *The Prayer Shield: How to Intercede for Pastors and Christian Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2014), location 628, Kindle.

evoked God's mercy (Num. 14:13-18). The following passage shows that the intimacy with God that Moses acquired through intercessory prayer changed God's mind from destroying the people, "Forgive the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have pardoned this people, from Egypt even until now. Then the Lord said, "I do forgive, just as you have asked" (Num. 14:19-20). These are just a few examples of the characteristics of how intercessory prayer empowers through establishing an intimate relationship with God, which develops into one whom God knows well, one whom God favors, and one whom God protects. Next are a few New Testament biblical examples of how intercessory prayer prepares and equips for working in the fields to reap the harvest.

For several months the disciples had an opportunity to sit under the leadership of Jesus, where he taught them many things, including how to execute power and authority as they served in the kingdom of God. The time had come for the disciples to go out into the harvest, but before sending them out, Luke tells us that "Jesus gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal" (Luke 9:1-2). They were able to do all that Jesus had taught them, except they were unable to cast the demon out of the boy because of little faith (Matt. 17:20), and "this kind could only come out through prayer" (Mark 9:29).

Some assignments in ministry require greater power and authority that can only come from having an intimate relationship with God. This is not to say that Jesus did not have the authority to give them, but that there are times where we must develop that authority through intercessory prayer on our own. John Wimber notes, "We cannot successfully live the Christian life in our own strength; the Father has sent the Holy Spirit

to empower us; we are commanded in scripture to “be filled with the Holy Spirit.”¹⁴

Remember Jesus taught the disciples how to pray and he also affirmed that they would do “greater works than these, because he was going to the Father” (John 14:12). Jesus also said that he is sending us out as lambs among wolves (Matt. 10:16). There are no hazmat uniforms or special combat training for this hazardous work, but the covering is the Holy Spirit which provides the power to defeat the enemies standing in the way of God’s plan. Along the lines of receiving the Holy Spirit to empower us for ministry, consider Peter and John in Acts chapter four where the community of faith came together in prayer petitioning God to allow them to preach the Gospel with boldness (Acts 4:29). God answered their prayers filling them with the Holy Spirit allowing them to speak the word with boldness (Acts 4:31). In fact, Acts chapter four is foundational for this project as it demonstrates that the power released when we pray prepares, equips, and empowers us to serve with confidence, strength, and humility in carrying out the will of God on earth.

I am passionate about how the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer equips and empowers leaders for ministry. Over the many years in my corporate career, I have gleaned valuable insight through organizational leadership and development training. This training prepared me for leading many organizations empowering others to lead. When I moved into ministry, I applied some of my corporate training and experience to managing ministry teams, events, and monthly fellowships. However, I must admit that nothing, except intercessory prayer, prepared me for the intricacies of leading in ministry, where I often felt inadequate, overwhelmed, and powerless. Note that seminary requires two years of field training because leading in ministry is ultimately through practice; in

¹⁴ John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2014), 23.

other words, you must learn as you go, and this was evident in the training the disciples received. The most helpful training that Jesus gave the disciples was a lesson on how to pray because prayer released the gifts of the Holy Spirit, empowering them for service. Therefore, if we are to follow Jesus' leadership style, then we cannot make disciples without teaching them how to pray. For this reason, I am passionate about the topic for this project.

I bring to this Doctor of Ministry project several years of ministry experience to include Christian education, community service, evangelism, missions, and years of experience working in various leadership roles within the corporate sector. Additionally, my ministry journey includes over fifty years serving as an intercessor which developed and empowered me spiritually through the power of the Holy Spirit. This ministry journey and educational development provided opportunities that God used to equip, develop, and empower me as a leader in ministry today. Therefore, I believe my extensive training and experience provides the qualifications to address the needs of the context and pave the way to design the framework for completing this Doctor of Ministry project.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is my desire to fulfill the requirements for this project by establishing the basis for the development of an intercessory prayer model that empowers ministry leaders to serve. The theme for this project will fall under leadership empowerment through intercessory prayer. I hope to establish and affirm that if ministry leaders take part in a training program regarding intercessory prayer, then they will

become empowered to serve and lead more effectively in ministry. The general plan is to establish three data collection methods to collect data on what they learned and how they were informed by the training and empowered by the practice of intercessory prayer.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, the focus will be on how intercessory prayer empowers believers for service. The biblical passages to establish the foundation for the context supporting this hypothesis will engage the New Testament scriptures in Acts 4:23-31 which illustrates how prayer draws the presence of God into the community of believers, releases the Holy Spirit, and empowers believers for ministry. The secondary scripture that will support the project is Matthew 21:12-14, which establishes that the temple in Jesus to be a house of prayer. The two scriptures are theologically connected and foundationally supportive of the hypothesis as the church is framed by the mission found in Jesus as the eschatological temple and shaped by the ministry of the church through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the mission and ministry of Christ. The examination will provide the historical, religious, biblical contexts, the form, structure, and movement of the text, followed by a detailed exegetical analysis of the passages. The concluding section will address potential arguments and summarize the foundational biblical sources supporting this claim. These pericopes align and supports the hypothesis for this Doctor of Ministry project which is if ministry leaders learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, then they will become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to lead in ministry.

Acts 4:23-31 reads:

After they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them it is you who said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant: ‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah.’ For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

The background information leading up to Acts 4:23-31 begins in chapter three of Acts.

Thus, Acts, chapter three verses one through eight, Peter and John, on their way to the temple for prayer, encountered a lame man sitting at the temple gate begging for alms (Acts 3:2-3). After getting the man’s attention, Peter said to him, “silver and gold I do not possess, but what I do possess, I give to you. Peter took the man by the hand and declared him healed in the name of Jesus. Immediately the man was strengthened and leaped up praising God” (Acts 3:6-8). The people marveled at the sight of the lame man walking and began to inquire of the miracle. Peter addressed the people by sharing with them that the healing of the man was through faith in the name of Jesus. Peter and John continued preaching the Gospel to the crowds of people gathered in which approximately 5,000 believed and began to follow the disciple’s teachings (Acts 3:17-26).

In continuation of the narrative from Acts chapter three, chapter four of Acts, verses twenty-three through thirty-one, focuses on prayer in the Christian community of Jerusalem. Arrested and threatened by the high priests prohibiting them from proclaiming

the Gospel of Jesus, Peter and John joined their fellow believers in corporate prayer and made their requests known to God. The structure of this prayer imploring God to move against the threats so that the believers can continue to proclaim the gospel of Jesus was in three parts: 1) they recognized who God is, 2) they remembered God's word, and 3) they requested God's intervention to enable them to continue the proclamation of the gospel with boldness.¹ The authority God gave humankind from the very beginning and the promise of the Holy Spirit to receive power would come to all who believe to enable them to do the work of the ministry (Acts 1:8). In furtherance on building this foundation, Matthew 21:12-14 provides additional backing from a theological perspective which establishes that the house of God, the holy temple, the church is a house of prayer.

Matthew 21:12-13 reads:

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers."

Here, Jesus entered the temple courtyard area, also known as the Court of the Gentiles, only to observe that the temple area had become a place for commerce activities. Jesus' objection of rebuke was not against the traders themselves, but indirectly against the priestly establishment who allowed the misuse of a sacred area for commerce instead of prayer.² Jesus enters the temple area and then rebukes those activities and quotes from the Old Testament passage in Isaiah, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a robbers' den'" (Isa. 56:7). Another rendition of this

¹ Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles: UBS Handbook* (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1972), 104.

² R. T. France, "The Gospel of Matthew," *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 770.

passage echoed from Isaiah is in Jeremiah, where God confronts Jeremiah with the question, “Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the Lord” (Jer. 7:11). The symbolic action, as some scholars identify as the theme, points to the restoration or cleansing of the whole temple to establish in this declaration that the temple shall be called (καλέω), shall be named, shall identify with a house for prayer. The house of God, a holy place, is to be reserved as a place where people come to worship and pray.³ Thus, immediately following this declaration, Jesus healed the blind and the lame as they came to him. The practice of prayer in community of believers provides the context for ministry to carry out the mission of the church. Chapter four will cover in more detail the Practical Theology of empowerment for ministry through intercessory prayer.

Biblical Foundation – Acts 4:23-31

Historical Context

The Book of Acts, also called the Acts of the Apostles, is a continuation from the Gospel of Luke as noted in chapter one of Acts. Luke, an evangelist, a physician, a Gentile from Antioch, and a companion to Paul authored both books.⁴ The “Explanatory Preface” in Chapter one of the Gospel of Luke, writes to Theophilus summarizing his reasons for yet another compilation of the events that took place regarding the life and

³ Mark J. Cartledge, *The Mediation of the Spirit: Interventions in Practical Theology*, Pentecostal Manifestos Series (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 12.

⁴ Hans Conzelmann, Eldon Jay Epp, and Christopher R. Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, *Hermeneia* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987), 37.

ministry of Jesus. Since Luke was not an eyewitness, one could infer from Luke's reason for investigations of the eyewitness accounts was that he wanted to pull together all the information from various sources into a single compilation for evangelistic purposes. Continuing along the same lines, in the Book of Acts, Luke writes to Theophilus a compilation of the events that took place regarding the history of the early church.⁵ The date of composition for the Book of Acts is not definite, but historical events date the composition to sometime after the temple destruction in A. D. 70 putting the best possible date of composition between A.D. 80 – A.D. 100,⁶ although, some scholars contend with an earlier date before A.D. 70.⁷

Form, Structure, and Movement

Although the Book of Acts constitutes mostly narratives, it also contains several discourses intricately inserted into the narrative structure.⁸ Luke carefully writes to those whom he wants to know the truth in the important developments of early Christianity.⁹ At the time of the New Testament events, Greek was the universal language of the eastern part of the Roman Empire.¹⁰ Luke's language and style for both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts is Koine.¹¹ Koine was the common literary Greek language of the

⁵ William Foxwell Albright and C. S. Mann, *The Anchor Bible: The Acts of the Apostles* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), xvi.

⁶ Conzelmann, Epp, and Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles*, xxxiii.

⁷ Albright and Mann, *The Anchor Bible*, xlvii.

⁸ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 1.

⁹ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 1.

¹⁰ Albright and Mann, *The Anchor Bible*, xxv.

¹¹ Conzelmann, Epp, and Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles*, xxxv–xxxvi.

Hellenistic period, and Koine was the language in which most of the New Testament was written.¹² Munck notes Luke's style differs from most New Testament authors and that he was very articulate in the variations of word choices and phrases.¹³ Luke was an accomplished writer who learned various narration styles and techniques and applied them with impressive skill.¹⁴ In the context of writing to bring clarity to the events that took place in the ministry and resurrection of Jesus, Luke pulled together all written sources, interviewed many eyewitnesses, and followed Paul's ministry which resulted in a cohesive narration of the Gospel by Luke and the Acts of the Apostles.

The movement of the narratives in Acts traces the successive accounts of the ministry of Peter in Acts chapters one through twelve, followed by the successive ministry of Paul in Acts chapters thirteen through twenty-eight.¹⁵ However, considering the ministry of Peter and Paul, the movement builds and extends the Church, first among the Jews and then to the Gentiles coupled with the narration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶

¹² Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary: Anchor Yale Bible*, vol. 27 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 535.

¹³ Albright and Mann, *The Anchor Bible*, xxvi.

¹⁴ Richard I. Pervo and Harold W. Attridge, *Hermeneia: Acts: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 8.

¹⁵ Francis Martin and Thomas C. Oden, eds., *Acts: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 5* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006), xix.

¹⁶ Martin and Oden, *Acts*, xix.

Religious Context

Acts provides the historical narratives on the geographical spread of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome, beginning with the apostles and ending with Paul. The spread of the gospel first started in Jerusalem, moved throughout Palestine, as far as Antioch, beyond the boundaries of Asia Minor, into Europe, and finally spread through Rome.¹⁷ In the second half of the first century, which is between A.D. 50 – A.D. 100, Christians recognized the twelve apostles as the true leaders of the church concerning the spread of the gospel.¹⁸ The church multiplied and was growing stronger every day. Although opposition against the spread of the gospel remained, it became less of a problem as the number of believers increased.¹⁹

Biblical Context

The Book of Acts, chapter four, begins with Peter and John continuing to preach the resurrected Jesus when opposition enters the scene. The preaching of the resurrected Jesus did not sit well with the high priests, Sadducees, and the elders, so they arrested Peter and John detaining them until the next day. The next day, the apostles appeared before the Sanhedrin, also known as the high priests' political council, questioning them on what authority and by what name were the acts of healing performed.²⁰ Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter declared by the authority in the name of the resurrected

¹⁷ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2.

¹⁸ Albright and Mann, *The Anchor Bible*, i.

¹⁹ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 3.

²⁰ Anthony J. Saldarini, s.v. "Sanhedrin," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 975.

Jesus, the Christ, that this man who was lame can now stand before the council and walk. By this declaration, the council could not deny what they witnessed, nor were they ready to contend with all the believers in Jerusalem. Therefore, they released the apostles, threatening them to no longer speak or teach in the name of Jesus. However, Peter and John stood their ground and vowed to listen to God rather than threats, for they would continue speaking on what they saw and heard. After the apostles left the prison, they returned to their community of believers and shared with them all that happened to them.²¹ Together they implored God in prayer, which resulted in prayer that shook the house. Evidence of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit filled each of them, enabling them to speak with boldness. To put it briefly, Luke portrays how the community of believers join Peter and John in prayer, addressing God as the Creator of all and the One whose hand can provide the power for their ministry to continue with boldness.²² Their prayers echoed the Old Testament prayers of David in Psalm 2:1-2, Hezekiah in Isaiah 37:16, and Ezra in Nehemiah 9:6.

The Old Testament has many allegories, where God provided the power and direction to perform the work of the Lord. In the Book of Exodus, Moses climbed the mountain to get into the presence of God, and God called Moses out of the bush. This calling was an assignment to deliver the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, and God gave Moses the power to carry out the assignment (Exod. 4:12). In the Book of 1 Samuel, Saul received the assignment from God to reign over the people and to save them for their

²¹ C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles: International Critical Commentary* (Edinburgh, UK: T and T Clark, 2004), 240.

²² Dennis Hamm, "Acts 4:23-31: A Neglected Biblical Paradigm of Christian Worship (Especially in Troubled Times)," *Worship* 77, no. 3 (May 2003): 228, <https://doi.org/ATLA0001430737&sits=ehost-live>.

enemies, and the spirit of the Lord fell on Saul; and he became a prophet and king for the Lord (1 Sam. 10:1,6). In the Book of Numbers, the Spirit of the Lord indwelt Joshua, whom God commissioned to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land (Num. 27:18). In the Book of Judges, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel, Gideon, and others whom God commissioned to deliver the Israelites from their enemies (Judg. 3:9-10, 6:12, 34). The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David after Samuel anointed him as King (1 Sam. 16:19).

Likewise, in the New Testament, there are many scriptures where the voice of God and the power of God empowered others for ministry. Jesus became the primary model for believers to follow in obeying the voice of God empowered for ministry, “the words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works” (Jn. 14:10). In the Book of Acts, Peter heard and responded to the voice of God, “The Spirit told me to go with them without misgivings” (Acts 11:12). The power of God for ministry was evident in the narrative of the imprisonment of Paul and Silas in Jerusalem, where their miraculous release resulted in the prison guard, and his entire household hearing the salvation message, becoming believers, and receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 15: 22-34). In each of the references where God called, commissioned, and empowered his servants, obeying the voice of God is what led to victory through divine instruction and power to carry out their commissioned duties.

Although these Old and New Testament historical sources are not all-inclusive, it unequivocally affirms that the Spirit of the Lord fell upon many who received power for service. Perhaps, one might argue that these Old and New Testament sources do not show where prayer instituted the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord. Indeed, prayer is a

conversation with God or responding to the voice of God.²³ Ruthven notes, “The central theme of the Bible is seeking God and hearing his voice in our hearts.”²⁴ In each of these sources, God spoke to his people explicitly, which means there was a conversation. Therefore, in these Old and New Testament sources, the voice of God speaking to his people is an allusion to prayer.

Detailed Exegetical Analysis – Acts 4:23-31

English Translation and Greek Text

A word-for-word analysis from the original Greek text to the English translation of the interlinear rendition of Acts 4:23-31, according to the New American Standard Bible (NASB) translation, renders the following key phrases relative to how they prayed and what they prayed for: In v. 24, with one accord (ὁμοθυμαδὸν) they lifted up (ᾤσαν) their voices (φωνήν) to God (πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν) by acknowledging God’s sovereignty (Δέσποτα), God’s hand (ἡ χεὶρ σου) in v. 28 symbolizing divine power to defeat the enemies of the gospel, and in v. 29 they requested God to grant the servants (δοῦλοισι σου) with boldness to speak (μετὰ παρρησίας πάσης λαλεῖν) the word of God (τὸν λόγον σου).

²³ Mark Virkler and Patti Virkler, *Dialogue with God* (Orlando, FL: Bridge-Logos, 1986), ix.

²⁴ Jon Ruthven, *What’s Wrong with Protestant Theology? Tradition vs. Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word and Spirit Press, 2013), 199.

Word Analysis

This section provides key words and phrases that either directly relate to or alludes to prayer and warrants further analysis to establish the terms of prayer in this pericope:

The phrase, “they raised their voices (ἤραν φωνήν)” is the underlying meaning of αἶρω (the root of ἤραν, third person plural form of the word) is “to lift up,” and φωνή (root of φωνήν) “voice” which literally means “lift up voice.”²⁵ The interpretative translation is that “they prayed to God.” Another form of this lifting up to God in prayer is that of looking up to God as in, “So they took away the stone. And Jesus *looked upward or raised* (αἶρω) *his eyes* and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me”” (Jn. 11:41). There are many physical positions when coming to God in prayer.

The phrase, “With one accord (ὁμοθυμαδόν)” is a compound word that translates to the phrase “in unison,” “on one accord,” or “with one mind.”²⁶ From a spiritual point of view, when they lifted their voices on one accord, with one mind together, they were in “sync” with making their requests known to God. This form of prayer is a type of corporate prayer, or praying in agreement as noted in, “Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven” (Matt. 18:19). They were spiritually together in heart, mind, and desires when they prayed.

²⁵ Joachim Jeremias, “Αἶρω, Ἐπαίρω,” ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 185.

²⁶ William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 706.

The word “prayed (δέομαι, δέησις)” is a Greek form of prayer in verse twenty-four and verse thirty-one is a more urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God.²⁷ It is a petition to beg God to do something. This type of prayer is an *earnest* prayer, and this New Testament term is exclusively used by Luke and Paul.²⁸ Another example of this form of prayer is in Philippians 1:19, “for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance.” The construction of this term in a phrase such as δέομαι πρὸς τινα which denotes prayer on behalf of another as a form of prayer of intercession as in “Simon answered, pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may happen to me” (Acts 8:24). The more general term of prayer is προσευχή as in, “While Peter was kept in prison, the church *prayed fervently* to God for him” (Acts 12:5).

To “speak (λαλέω)” as referenced in verse twenty-nine translates in various forms as in “to speak,” “to preach,” “to talk,” and “to utter.” Within the context of the New Testament historical use of the word, it means to importune someone with speeches.²⁹ The term “importune” means to press or to urge with troublesome persistence.³⁰ This form of the word “speak” in the context of speaking with boldness could very well translate to the phrase “to preach with boldness.” For example, in Ephesians 6:20 to speak boldly renders as a different form of the word speak (παρρησιάζομαι), “for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it

²⁷ Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 213.

²⁸ Kittel, Bromiley, and Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 41.

²⁹ Kittel, Bromiley, and Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 3.

³⁰ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, s. v. “importune” (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

boldly, as I must speak.” The Greek term “speak παρρησιάζομαι” in this context means to preach boldly when used with other modifiers.³¹ In verse thirty-one, the Greek form of the word “began to speak” or “spoke” is the same Greek rendition of Λαλέω.

With “Boldness (παρρησία)” when referenced in verse twenty-nine and verse thirty-one means to speak boldly as in παρρησιάζομαι. Some translations may render this as speak with confidence, speak plainly, preach boldly. In either of these translations, the term should translate to the phrase “to speak boldly” with the understanding that it means to grow confident, have boldness, show assurance, assume a bold bearing.³²

Translation Comparisons

The translation comparison table compares the Acts 4:23-31 in three different translations, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the New English Translation (NET), and the Today’s New International Version (TNIV).

Table 1. Comparison of Acts 4:23-31 translations

| Acts 4:23-31 NRSV | Acts 4:23-31 NET | Acts 4:23-31 TNIV |
|--|---|---|
| 23 After they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. | 23 When they were released, Peter and John went to their fellow believers and reported everything the high priests and the elders had said to them. | 23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. |
| 24 When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them, | 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices to God with one mind and said, “Master of all, you who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them, | 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. |

³¹ Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 782.

³² Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 781.

| Acts 4:23-31 NRSV | Acts 4:23-31 NET | Acts 4:23-31 TNIV |
|---|--|---|
| 25 it is you who said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant: ‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things?’ | 25 who said by the Holy Spirit through your servant David our forefather, ‘Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot foolish things?’ | 25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: “‘Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?’ |
| 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah.’ | 26 The kings of the earth stood together, and the rulers assembled together, against the Lord and against his Christ.’ | 26 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.’ |
| 27 For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, | 27 “For indeed both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, | 27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. |
| 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. | 28 to do as much as your power and your plan had decided beforehand would happen. | 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. |
| 29 And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, | 29 And now, Lord, pay attention to their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your message with great courage, | 29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. |
| 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” | 30 while you extend your hand to heal, and to bring about miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” | 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” |
| 31 When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. | 31 When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God courageously. | 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. |

Verse twenty-three is the beginning of the pericope, which many Bible translations title this section as “The Believers Pray for Boldness.” Variations in the translations note either after or on the release of Peter and John they went to their friends, their own people or to their fellow believers and reported all that the chief priests or high priests had said. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and the Today’s New International Version (TNIV) note chief priests, whereas the New English Translation NET notes the high priests. It is important to note that there is a difference between the chief priests and the high priests. The chief priests were responsible for the day-to-day responsibilities of the temple.³³ Whereas, the high priests were responsible for making atonement of the nation of Israel, they were functioning as the president of the Sanhedrin council and other authoritative roles.³⁴ Annas and Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas, were high priests during the ministry of Jesus, not chief priests (Jn. 18:13).

Verse twenty-four is very close between the three translations, with the exception of either, they raised their voices together to God (NRSV), or they raised their voices together in prayer to God (TNIV), or they raised their voices to God with one mind (NET). There is no single word for the phrase “with one mind.” The closest Greek term of this phrase is ὁμοθυμαδόν (*homothymadon*) which translates to “together,” “of one accord,” “with one mind,” “at the same time.” The New International Version (NIV) has the phrase “in prayer,” which is not in the original Greek text.³⁵ The NET translation uses

³³ G. D. Gee, “Priest in the New Testament,” in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), 849-850.

³⁴ Gee, *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia*, 849-850.

³⁵ Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Greek New Testament*, vol. 4, rev. ed. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001).

“Master of all instead” of “Sovereign Lord,” as translated in the NRSV and the NIV.

Sovereign is not in the Greek text.³⁶ However, the Hellenistic form of addressing God in prayer (*Δέσποτα*) is “Sovereign Lord.”³⁷

In verse twenty-five, “it is you who said,” “you spoke,” and “who said” is problematic as the variations in the translations indicate a problem with the construction and suggest reconstruction literally as, “who by the mouth of David thy servant didst say (ὁ διὰ στόματος Δαυὶδ τοῦ παιδός σου εἰπών).”³⁸ This introductory phrase is problematic, and the translation known to be the most difficult clause in the entire Book of Acts.³⁹ The next part of this verse is a quotation from Psalm 2:1, “Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain?” This quotation refers to when God preserved his servants from the Gentiles, peoples, rulers, and enemies in the world.⁴⁰ Both the NET and the TNIV translate the Greek term *ἔθνη* to nations in “why do the nations rage.” Whereas, NRSV translates this same term to Gentiles in the past tense, “why did the Gentiles rage” (Ps. 2:1).

Verse twenty-six notes the opposition from rulers and kings on the teachings of Jesus, whom God has anointed Messiah. The translations will either use Messiah (NRSV), anointed one (TNIV), or Christ (NET).⁴¹

³⁶ Aland and Aland, *The Greek New Testament*.

³⁷ Conzelmann, Epp, and Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles*, 34.

³⁸ Conzelmann, Epp, and Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles*, 34–35.

³⁹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 31 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 308.

⁴⁰ Albright and Mann, *The Anchor Bible*, 37.

⁴¹ Albright and Mann, *The Anchor Bible*, 37.

Verse twenty-seven is a continuation from verse twenty-six where the rulers and kings had formed an alliance against God's anointed one, Jesus the Messiah, the Christ. There is not much of a difference between translations, with the exception of the word placement or organization of the phrases. However, the TNIV adds a phrase on where and why the alliance formed, "in this city to conspire."

Verse twenty-eight, the believers declare God's sovereignty, extreme wisdom, and skill that God used to accomplish his predestined will.⁴² The variations between the translations are significant but are saying the same thing.

Verse twenty-nine introduces a transitional phrase "and now," which moves the prayer from the historical events and declaration to the request for strength to perform, to serve, to witness.⁴³ There are not many variations between translations with the exception of the verbs as in the NRSV "look at their threats;" the NET "consider their threats;" and the TNIV "pay attention to their threats." The request to "speak God's word with boldness" or "great boldness" is presented differently in the NET rendition, which requests "to speak God's message with great courage." The literal Greek translation is actually "word of God."

Verse thirty is not only requesting that the spread of the gospel continue, but the prayer is also requesting the continuation of the signs and wonders through the name of Jesus.⁴⁴ The stretching out of God's hand is symbolic of requesting God to show his

⁴² Martin and Oden, *Acts*, 54.

⁴³ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 108.

⁴⁴ C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles: International Critical Commentary* (Edinburgh, UK: T and T Clark, 2004), 249.

power and might against these threats.⁴⁵ This verse does not have any different variations between the three translations.

Verse thirty-one concludes the pericope with God answering their prayers with power. All three translations are speaking of receiving power either when they prayed or after they prayed. The correct Greek translation renders “after they finished praying,” the place shook, not while praying, but after they prayed.⁴⁶ All translations indicate they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God either with boldness, boldly, or began to speak courageously. The variations in the chosen words do not change the interpretation of the verse.

In summary, the early church depicted in verses twenty-three through thirty-one established a means of cultivating the move of the Holy Spirit, is through the practice of prayer. With the church being the body of Christ, its members must pray to receive power to witness. This next section, Matthew 21:12-14 will build on prayer in Jesus, who has come to fulfill the eschatological temple, will also establish the temple in him.

Biblical Foundation – Matthew 21:12-14

Historical Context

The gospel according to Matthew often referred to as the “Good News” gospel, is the first gospel of the Synoptic Gospels that captures the last days of the ministry of Jesus

⁴⁵ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 108.

⁴⁶ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, 109.

in Jerusalem.⁴⁷ Even though it is canonically placed first amongst the Synoptic Gospels, it is not the first to be written as Matthew's gospel has a literary connection to Mark's gospel as more than ninety percent of Mark's gospel appears in Matthew's gospel with more than fifty percent being word-for-word, and has a large number of references to the Old Testament.⁴⁸

The narrative of chapter twenty-one of Matthew begins with the location of Jesus being near Bethphage, at the Mount of Olive. The proximity of this location stands directly across from the temple entrance and about one hundred feet higher than Jerusalem.⁴⁹ The Mount of Olives has historical significance where Ezekiel had a vision of the New Jerusalem, where the glory of the Lord entered the eschatological temple.⁵⁰

Then he brought me to the gate, the gate facing east. And there, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east; the sound was like the sound of mighty waters; and the earth shone with his glory. The vision I saw was like the vision that I had seen when he came to destroy the city, and like the vision that I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. As the glory of the Lord entered the temple by the gate facing east, the spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and the glory of the Lord filled the temple (Ez. 43:1-5).

The temple imagery of Jesus being the eschatological temple, implicitly relates to the vision of Ezekiel. The location of the vision of Ezekiel is Olivet, also known as Mount of Olives. Mount of Olives was also the place where Jesus prayed in the Garden of

⁴⁷ Barclay Moon Newman and Philip C. Stine, *A Handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*, UBS Handbook Series (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1992), 5.

⁴⁸ Ben Witherington III, *Helwys Bible Commentary: Matthew*, ed. P. Keith Gammons and R. Alan Culpepper (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys Publishing, 2006), 3.

⁴⁹ Warren J. Heard Jr., *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 13.

⁵⁰ Heard Jr., *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, 13.

Gethsemane, (Matt. 26:30-36) and the place of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas and seized by the Roman soldiers (Matt. 26:47-57).

In the center of Jerusalem, in the most populated place where Jewish and Gentiles often congregate, is the temple. Meyers notes the Jerusalem temple played a central religious and cultic role in Israel, it was the place of political significance, and it was not a place of public gathering for prayer.⁵¹

Form, Structure, and Movement

There were many noted difficulties with the Gospel of Matthew in dividing the narratives into a themed structure. However, the literary form of the Gospel of Matthew brings together the story of Jesus as the Son of God with the narratives framed into five discourses: 1) the origin and person of Jesus, 2) the ministry and message of Jesus, 3) the mystery and revelation of Jesus, 4) the death and resurrection of Jesus, and 5) it closes with the Great Commission.⁵² The structure and movement within chapter twenty-one of Matthew, Luz notes it is framed by geographical reference:

Jesus approaches Jerusalem and leaves the city (vv. 1a, 17). The intervening narrative contains three geographical stages: it begins before the city (vv. 1b–9), moves into the city (vv. 10–11), and ends in the temple (vv. 12–16). The text is held together formally by the double acclamation of Jesus as Son of David (vv. 9, 15) and by the frequent Scripture quotations. The first, a fulfillment quotation, appears in a comment from the narrator (v. 5). The second follows in the mouth of the crowds (v. 9). With the third and fourth, Jesus interprets his own activity in the temple (v. 13) and that of the infant “children” who praise him (v. 16).⁵³

⁵¹ Carol Meyers, “Temple, Jerusalem,” in *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 351.

⁵² Ulrich Luz, “Matthew 1–7: A Commentary on Matthew 1–7,” in *Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Helmut Koester, rev. ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 14.

⁵³ Ulrich Luz, “Matthew 21–28: A Commentary,” in *Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Helmut Koester (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2005), 4.

Religious Context

The formation of the Christian church began in the disciples with Peter leading the way (Matt. 16:18). Matthew tells the story of Jesus from birth to resurrection. The Messiah had come, He preached the coming of the Kingdom, was put to death and would return. The disciples were to preach the doctrine of the kingdom as taught by Jesus and make disciples by baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as commissioned by Jesus. Jesus taught the twelve, and now the Gospel of Matthew teaches those who came after.

Biblical Context

The cleansing of the temple exists in all four gospels (Mark 11:15–19; Luke 19:45–48; John 2:13–22).⁵⁴ In Matthew chapter twenty-one of the narrative, Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem triumphantly riding on a donkey as prophesized in Zechariah, “...Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zec. 9.9). On his way to the temple, crowds of people worshipped him by placing their outer garments and some placing palms on the road leading to the temple singing “Hosanna in the highest” (Matt. 21:8-9).” All who witnessed, celebrated, while those who planned to kill him stood and watched from a distance. This event took place exactly one week before the crucifixion, which is now celebrated as Palm Sunday in remembrance of this historical event. Jesus, who is to fulfill the eschatological temple, verses twelve through fourteen, declares that the temple, the

⁵⁴ Newman and Stine, *A Handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*, 643–644.

place of worship, the place to bring sacrifices for remission of sin, is now to become a place for prayer. Jesus entered the temple only to observe that the temple area had become a place for commerce activities (Matt. 21:12-13). He then rebukes those activities and quotes from the passage of Isaiah and Jeremiah, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer, (Isa. 56:7) but you are making it a robbers’ den’” (Jer. 7:9-11).

Jesus establishes in this declaration that the temple shall be called (καλέω), shall be named, shall identify with a house for prayer, and then he immediately healed the blind and the lame as they came to him in the temple (Matt. 21:14).

According to Old Testament temple practices, the temple was the place where people came to submit their sacrifices to the high priest for atonement (Lev. 1:4). When the believer prays in that secret place and have faith, they receive, as the Word of God says, “whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive” (Matt. 21:22). As affirmed in the biblical foundation of Acts 4:23-31, prayer is hearing and obeying God. Therefore, in order to hear God, the Church, as a body, must pray. God dwells in the body; His spirit enters the body; it is the indwelling of the Spirit of God that transforms lives.

Detailed Exegetical Analysis – Matthew 21:12-14

English Translation and Greek Text (NASB)

A word-for-word analysis from the original Greek text to the English translation of the interlinear rendition of Matthew 21:12-14, according to the New American Standard Bible (NASB) translation, renders the following key phrases relative to Jesus

preparing the temple as the house of prayer: Jesus first cleanses (ἐξέβαλεν) the temple in v. twelve, and then he declares in v. thirteen “the house of me” (Ὁ οἶκός μου) which translates to his house to be a house of prayer (οἶκος προσευχῆς) .

Word Analysis

Jesus enters “the temple (ἱερόν, ἱερῶ / hieron, hiero)” is the Greek form of the noun ἱερόν/ἱερῶ designates either the whole temple including all buildings, porticos, courts, balconies, and the central sanctuary or certain parts of the temple.⁵⁵ In verse twelve, Jesus enters the temple, and this would be the outer courts, which is the place open to worshippers. He then cast out those who were buying and selling, and in verse fourteen, he heals the blind and lame in that same area.

The word “house (οἶκος, /oikos)” in verse thirteen, Jesus declares the temple ἱερόν to be a house of prayer. The Greek form of the noun οἶκος means a house or dwelling, a household, family as in the house of David. In this context, this form means “house” as in the temple at Jerusalem.⁵⁶

A “house of prayer (οἶκος προσευχῆς/ oikos proseuchēs)” in verse thirteen, προσευχῆς means petition addressed to God.⁵⁷ When used in a phrase as οἶκος μου οἶκος προσευχῆς, it translates to “house of me, a house of prayer.” This phrase οἶκος προσευχῆς

⁵⁵ William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 470.

⁵⁶ Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 698.

⁵⁷ Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 878.

(= ית־תפלה) is a direct quote from Isaiah 56:7.⁵⁸ This means a house devoted to the offering of prayer to God or a place set apart or suited for prayer to God.

Translation Comparisons of Matthew 21:12-14

The translation comparison table compares Matthew 21:12-14 in three different translations, the NRSV, NET, and TNIV. Also included in the translation comparisons is the analysis of the parallelism between the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth Gospel of John.

Table 2. Comparison of Matthew 21:12-14 translations

| Matthew 21:12-14 NRSV | Matthew 21:12-14 NET | Matthew 21:12-14 TNIV |
|---|---|--|
| 12 Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. | 12 Then Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all those who were selling and buying in the temple courts, and turned over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves. | 12 Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. |
| 13 He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer;’ but you are making it a den of robbers.” | 13 And he said to them, “It is written, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are turning it into a den of robbers!” | 13 “It is written,” he said to them, “‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’” |
| 14 The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. | 14 The blind and lame came to him in the temple courts, and he healed them. | 14 The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. |

In verse twelve, between the three translations, the location where Jesus enters the temple is either, the temple, the temple area, or the temple court. According to the word analysis of the Greek term *ἱερόν*, the place most likely would have been the outer court, the place open for worshippers. In the Synoptic Gospels, Mark adds “and he would not

⁵⁸ Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 878.

allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.” (Mk: 11:16). Luke omits buying in the temple and the overturned tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves (Lk. 19:45). John, add much more detail in his narrative where he notes Jesus made a whip of cords and drove out all those who were buying, selling, and the money changers seated at the tables. He adds that Jesus poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables (Lk. 2:13).

Verse thirteen is a direct quote from Isaiah 56:7. There are no significant differences between the translations, apart from the placement of the phrase “he said to them” as in the TNIV. Also, the use of the term “turning into” as opposed to “making it” a den of robbers. However, within the Synoptic Gospels, there are some notable differences. Mark notes Jesus is teaching and presents to his students the question, “is it not written, that my house shall be called a house of prayer,” adding “for all nations” (Mk. 11:17). Luke’s rendition has no notable differences. However, John’s account of what took place is very different from the Synoptic Gospels. He does not quote from Isaiah 56:7, but quotes that Jesus said, “Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!” Verse seventeen of John the second chapter is a quote from Psalm 69:9, “Zeal for your house will consume me,” which appears to be an incorrect placement of text.⁵⁹ In verse fourteen there are no notable differences between the translations. The healing of the blind and lame does not appear in the Synoptic Gospels or the Fourth Gospel of John.

⁵⁹ Ernst Haenchen, Robert Walter Funk, and Ulrich Busse, “John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John,” *Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), 184.

In summary, verses twelve through fourteen establishes that Jesus has declared that the temple to be a house of prayer. Though Christ departed the earth, he remains present through the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, “on the one hand on earth, in those who pray, and on the other hand with God, through his intercession.”⁶⁰ The Holy Spirit plays a critical role in equipping Jesus’ followers for continuing his mission in his absence.

Conclusion

This research using exegetical lenses to study Acts 4:23-31 with Matthew 21:12-14 affirms that these pericopes best support the purpose and goals of the project. The underlying theme exhibited by Luke significantly relates to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on a community of believers united in prayer, being a means for empowerment, enabling them to proclaim the word of God with great confidence. The supporting text, Matthew 21:12-14, establishes that the new temple in Jesus is to be a house of prayer, alluding to the Spirit-filled church made possible through a community of believers who come to the temple to prayer. Foundationally, the Holy Spirit plays a critical role in empowering believers to continue Jesus’ mission in his absence. There is no other way to experience the manifestations of the Holy Spirit accept to engage the body of Christ to pray. This doctoral project will provide the framework for training a community of ministry leaders in producing Christ-like, Spirit-centered and faith-driven prayers to engage the Holy Spirit and hear God. Thus, biblically supporting the purpose of the

⁶⁰ Oscar Cullmann and John Bowden, *Prayer in the New Testament: Answers for Today's Questions?* (London, UK: SCM Press, 1995), 103.

project to “Develop an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders to Serve.”

The next chapter will draw forth the historical foundation using contemporary lenses to examine how communication with God through intercessory prayer provided hermeneutical insight into the Word of God, equipped for the assignment, and provided divine empowerment to carry out the mission of Christ through the manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter will engage the historical figure Charles Grandison Finney, a nineteenth century revivalist to form the basis that intercessory prayer facilitates the empowerment of ministry leaders for service as presented in the New Testament scriptures established in the biblical foundations chapter for this project. Precisely, the New Testament scriptures affirm the corporate expression of prayer theologically and illustrate how prayer draws the presence of God into the community of believers, releases the Holy Spirit, and empowers believers for ministry. The ministry legacy of Charles Grandison Finney, as delineated in this chapter, best captures this hypothesis.

The institution of the New Testament church began when the disciples experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that is the power from on high as promised by Jesus upon his ascension (Lk. 24:49). The ascension of Jesus to the Father was the precursor for the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit. Subsequently, just before his ascension, Jesus reminded the disciples that his suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection were necessary to fulfill the Old Testament prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit of God on all flesh (Joel 2:28). Even more, the disciples, as witnesses, were to preach repentance and remission of sins in the name of Jesus to all nations beginning at Jerusalem; but they were to wait in Jerusalem for the full endowment of power from on

high.¹ Even though Jesus prepared and trained the disciples to be witnesses, they had not received the power necessary to equip them for ministry.

As instructed, the eleven disciples returned to Jerusalem, and they gathered together in an upper room with other followers of Jesus, and prayed until power from on high had suddenly come upon each of them like the sound of a mighty rushing wind filling the house where they gathered (Acts 2:2). The sound was not only heard by those who were in the upper room but heard by all those who were dwelling in Jerusalem. As a result, multitudes of people from diverse groups came together inquiring in amazement, bewildered, and in disbelief of what they heard and witnessed.² Peter testified with power, and after hearing his testimony on the resurrected Christ, those who believed and willingly received the words of the apostles, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit establishing the New Testament church with 3,000 souls added.³

To begin, Finney establishes that, “no one has, at any time, any right to expect success, unless he first secures this endowment of power from on high.”⁴ The prerequisite to receiving this power is through the practice of prayer, as established in Matthew 21:12-14, in which Jesus declares the temple of God to be a house of prayer. This historical figure also provides the basis for this foundation to affirm that the church, as the body of Christ, must spend devoted time in prayer to receive power for service.

¹ Grant R. Osborne, “Apostolic Age,” in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 134.

² Gary L. Carver, “Acts 2:42-47,” *Review and Expositor* 87, no. 3 (1990): 246.

³ Carver, “Acts 2:42-47,” 437.

⁴ James E. Johnson, “Charles G. Finney and a Theology of Revivalism,” *Church History* 38, no. 3 (September 1969): 338, <https://doi.org/ATLA0000716342>.

Historical Perspective on Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875)

A revivalist by the name of Charles Grandison Finney appeared on the American religious scene in the early 1820s, with his most active years in ministry being from 1826 to 1831 when the revivals were most prominent.⁵ Finney became the forerunner amongst many notable ministers who contributed to the “great revivals of religion,” so named, of the mid to late nineteenth century. The revivals paved the way for an extensive movement of the Christian church which brought about changes in the presentation of the gospel and changes in the work of evangelism resulting in many conversions of souls.⁶ Finney was also known as the great evangelist of his time because he had a knack with making his sermons come alive, thus captivating the receptive audience to move toward conversion. Just as demonstrated in Acts chapter four, the spark that ignited the fire for the revival movement to spread so rapidly was prayer. Finney’s Christian journey demonstrated that he received power for service through prayer, and thousands converted to Christianity and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁷

Family Religious Influence

Charles Grandison Finney was the seventh child born to Rebecca (Rice) and Sylvester Finney in Warren, Litchfield County, Connecticut, on August 29, 1792.⁸

⁵ Johnson, “Charles G. Finney,” 338, <https://doi.org/ATLA0000716342>.

⁶ Charles G. Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney* (New York, NY: Fleming Revell Company, 1876), 2.

⁷ Kathryn Long, *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening*, Religion in America Series (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 20.

⁸ G. Frederick Wright, *Charles Grandison Finney* (Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), 1.

Finney's parents named him after a fictitious character known as Sr. Charles Grandison from one of Samuel Richardson's novel published in 1753.⁹ The author of this character portrayed Sr. Charles Grandison to be a good man, a fine gentleman, and notably a character who remained firm to his beliefs as an Anglican Protestant who understood the importance of being obedient to God and to society.¹⁰

Many scholars did not mention Finney's religious background, and several scholars note that Finney did not come from a religious family. Contrary to their remarks on Finney's religious background, Wright notes that during that time and specifically where they lived, there were very few meeting-houses, educated ministers, and religious books available to provide religious opportunities for the family.¹¹ Also, the advanced emigration of the time limited the family's ability to settle long enough to build religious roots. However, there were findings that in 1756, his grandfather, Josiah Finney, purchased land and donated it to the ecclesiastical society for building the first meeting-house in the town where they resided.¹²

Before Finney was two years old, his family moved to a temporary location in the wilderness of Central New York in Oneida County, then finally settling in Kirkland, New York; where they remained for fourteen years.¹³ During the fourteen years in Kirkland,

⁹ Wright, *Charles Grandison Finney*, 1.

¹⁰ Samuel Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison: In a Series of Letters Published from the Originals, by Editor of Pamela and Clarissa (Part 1 of VII)* (London, UK: S. Richardson and Dublin, n.d.), location 43, Kindle.

¹¹ Wright, *Charles Grandison Finney*, 3.

¹² Bonnie C. Harvey, *Charles Finney: Apostle of Revival* (Ulrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing, 1999), 13.

¹³ Hughes Oliphant Old, "The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church," in *The Modern Age*, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 449.

Finney received his early education in primitive schools of Western New York, taught primarily by college students with limited resources. At the age of fourteen, he entered Oneida Academy located close to his father's farm in Clinton, New York; which was where he became proficient in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, music, sports, and studied there for two years.¹⁴ Harvey notes that while Finney was at the academy, he may have had his first encounter with religion through a missionary to the American Indians whose name was Samuel Kirkland and whom Finney knew very well.¹⁵ However, the depth of that relationship is not known, and primary sources confirm Finney had no Christian experience in growing up as a child or during his school-aged years.¹⁶ Sometime in 1808, his parents moved to the shore of Henderson Bay near Sacketts Harbor located on the extreme eastern end of Lake Ontario and further north near the Canada border, where Finney began to teach in the district school of Hamilton extending three years.

Educational Religious Influence

After spending a few years teaching, Finney now twenty years old, felt led to return to his native town in Warren, Connecticut. Finney returned to further his undergraduate studies at Yale while continuing to teach in a German community in New Jersey to support himself. During his stay in Connecticut, Finney had an opportunity to attend a prayer meeting led by an educated pastor named Rev. Peter Starr. Although Pastor Starr's preaching style moved Finney, it did not move him enough to become part

¹⁴ Harvey, *Charles Finney*, 14.

¹⁵ Harvey, *Charles Finney*, 13.

¹⁶ A. M. Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," *The Works of Charles Finney*, vol. 1 (Cincinnati, OH: Knapp, 1902), location 121, Kindle.

of the Christian community that settled there.¹⁷ For six years, Finney continued his studies until his teacher advised him to pursue private studies to advance expeditiously toward completing his degree requirements at Yale.

Thus, after concluding his studies at Yale, Finney received an invitation from his teacher to journey with him south to open an academy. However, Finney's parents advised him to return to Jefferson County, New York, to be close to the family due to his mother's illness.¹⁸ Consequently, Finney, now twenty-six years old, returned to Jefferson County, New York, where he secured an apprenticeship in the law offices of Squire Benjamin Wright located in Adams County, New York, and was eventually admitted into the bar, and began to practice law.¹⁹

Now at the crossroads of his conversion experience, Finney reflects in his memoirs, that "there was never a time that he could remember enjoying religious privileges, or being part of a praying community, or drawn into conversion by an impactful sermon that would captivate a young man's attention like himself to care anything about salvation."²⁰ He also notes, "Living in the wilderness hindered his ability to attend prayer-meetings regularly, making him almost ignorant of religion."²¹ It was not until his law studies in Adams County where Finney began to kindle a Christian walk. Due to the location and the proximity of the church, Finney was now able to regularly attend prayer meetings in Adams County, because they were walking distance from the

¹⁷ Harvey, *Charles Finney*, 17.

¹⁸ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 137, Kindle.

¹⁹ Old, *The Modern Age*, 449.

²⁰ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 137, Kindle.

²¹ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 137, Kindle.

church. Being intrigued by the many scripture references in his law books to the Old Testament laws of Moses, Finney purchased his first Bible to satisfy his curiosity on the relevance of the biblical laws, meanwhile drawing him to search and meditate on the Word of God carefully.²²

The pastor of the church where Finney regularly attended the prayer meetings and led the choir was Rev. George W. Gale. Rev. Gale was a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary with strong views on the doctrine of Calvinism imparted to him through seminary studies.²³ However, he was also very much influenced by Jonathan Edwards, Timothy Dwight and others who put emphasis on the conversion experience.²⁴ Finney was very critical of Rev. Gale's sermons, his ineffective delivery, and Calvinistic theology in which Finney felt he was "rather perplexed than edified."²⁵

According to Finney, under Rev. Gale's theology, no one had a chance to secure their repentance or conversion unless they were part of the elect. Therefore, Finney challenged Rev. Gale's views against an exegetical analysis of the biblical text. Through a careful reading of the Bible, Finney still had a different understanding than Rev. Gale's theology in that to receive salvation, one only needs to confess their sins, give their heart to Christ, and receive God's everlasting love which is available to everyone; one just needs to accept the gift.²⁶ The complexities on doctrine introduced by Rev. Gale's sermons was the springboard that compelled Finney to engage devoted time in prayer and

²² Wright, *Charles Grandison Finney*, 19.

²³ Old, *The Modern Age*, 450.

²⁴ Old, *The Modern Age*, 450.

²⁵ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 153, Kindle.

²⁶ Old, *The Modern Age*, 456–57.

Bible studies to get answers to the many questions he had regarding repentance, sanctification, atonement, regeneration, and several others on conversion.²⁷

Conversion Experience

Even though Finney was very active in serving in the church and spent significant time attending prayer meetings, he had not made a personal confession of faith. By this time, at the age of twenty-nine, Finney was still searching for answers to the many questions he had on the doctrines of the gospel concerning the truth, which hindered him from making a decision one way or the other. The theological position between the Calvinistic views on Christian doctrine and Finney's understanding of what the Bible says became a stumbling block leading him into deep distress. Additionally, he struggled with the fact that the prayers that he witnessed in the prayer meetings remained unanswered week after week. Thus, he developed a determination to find the answers, whether to just satisfy his intellect or to move him toward conversion.²⁸ Finney continued attending prayer meetings and searching his Bible for answers.

After searching for several months, he finally had an epiphany moment as to why the prayers remained unanswered. He realized those in prayer had not fully complied with the conditions for God to answer their prayers. Finney affirmed they were to pray in faith, expecting God to give them what they asked for. Finney notes, "Faith was a voluntary trust not an intellectual state of mind."²⁹ He further elaborates as follows, "as

²⁷ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 7.

²⁸ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 7.

²⁹ Harvey, *Charles Finney*, 23.

written in the word of God, ‘whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive’” (Matt. 21:22). This revelation was a relief inspiring him to spend more time in prayer. By this, he developed an earnestness for God and began to experience an intimate relationship with an inward desire to seek salvation.

On his way to the office, Finney heard an inward voice asking him why he had not moved on to making a decision to accept the gift of salvation. This question became a juncture in his life to either settle the question of his soul’s salvation or continue along the worldly course of life.³⁰ Finney chooses to accept salvation or “die in the attempt.”³¹ Finney now understood the atonement of Christ, realizing that he had to submit to the righteousness of God through Christ. Initially, he was hesitant as he knew that submitting to conversion would mean he had to submit everything that he previously promised God, including giving up his law practice. However, the Holy Spirit quickened his spirit to make a move that day. Although a little hesitant, he proceeded to walk to a familiar place in the woods where he could be alone in prayer.³²

On the condition of giving his heart to Christ, Finney knew that it also meant that he must submit to ministry, which further meant that he needed to receive power from on high as the enabler for a fruitful ministry. Now, in a private place deep in the woods, Finney attempted to pray but found difficulty with how to approach God in prayer. He became discouraged because he understood the meaning of atonement, but just could not get the assurance it was for him as he felt unworthy of such a gift. God knew Finney’s

³⁰ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 7.

³¹ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 14.

³² Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 14.

troubling heart and imparted this scripture into his spirit, “When you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me” (Jer. 29:12-12). At first Finney was not sure if that was scripture in the Bible, but his experience of being in the presence of God assured him it was God speaking to him.

Now comforted, Finney prayed fervently to God for several hours submitting to the will of God over his life. Finney remained in prayer for several hours until almost dusk. After returning to his office, he remained in the presence of God and continued in prayer every chance he could get. He was unable to eat or sleep as he was still feeling the impact from the day before. It was only a few days after his conversion that Finney then received the baptism in the Holy Spirit as he described, “it flowed over me like waves of liquid love until I could not bear anymore.”³³ The waves of the Holy Spirit continued to pour into him for several days after, to his amazement without asking. When prayer of thanksgiving, adoration, and love becomes an internal worship as if laying prostrate at the feet of Christ, there will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in response to a sincere heart of receiving God’s love, “hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). The conversion of Finney’s heart enabled him to receive power from on high and prepared him to be a witness of the gospel.

³³ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 20.

Empowerment for Service

Now as a new convert, excited about the beginning of a new life, and eager to spread the good news to others that they too may receive, Finney shared his conversion experience with several people including his parents. With the anointing flowing from Finney, all those who heard his testimony had a conversion experience causing the joy of receiving the Holy Spirit to spread throughout all the towns in the county.³⁴ Considering the New Testament outpourings of the Holy Spirit comparatively with the revivals, there was not a sound from heaven as in Acts 2:2, and the place did not shake as in Acts 4:31; there was the sound of revival coming from all who received the outpourings of the Holy Spirit as in Acts 2:41. In each case, the Spirit of the Lord moved amongst the people amid their fervent prayers. Moreover, Finney believed that when the people are not praying, when there is no movement of conversions or believers are not responding to becoming sanctified, then this is a symptom that there is a lack of Holy Spirit empowerment, which is vital and necessary for fruitful ministry.³⁵ This statement supports scripture, where Jesus informs his disciples that apart from him they could do nothing (Jn. 5:5). Therefore, as commissioned by Jesus, this empowerment for service is the essential condition of performing the work which is set before all Christians.

Subsequently, Finney began his ministry almost immediately after his conversion in the far north of the state of New York along the shores of the Saint Lawrence River. Additionally, Finney received calls to lead revivals in Utica, Troy, and Rochester, and

³⁴ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 31.

³⁵ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 277, Kindle.

there were reports of conversions occurring at every meeting; and the fire of revival began to spread wherever he preached.³⁶ Not only did God shower Finney with the Holy Spirit, he also gave him favor in ministry, a boldness to declare the word of God, and a heart for evangelism. Afterwards, Finney spent a significant amount of time in prayer along with successive days in fasting, and many times he would find himself wandering off into the woods to find a quiet place alone with God.³⁷ As a result of one of Finney's sermons, a woman shared a testimony on when she gave her heart to God, the Lord taught her how to read, but only after she learned how to pray.³⁸ Here is an excerpt of Finney sermon that the women experienced in the service:

I insisted upon the voluntary total moral depravity of the unregenerate and the unalterable necessity of a radical change of heart by the Holy Ghost, and by means of the truth. I laid great stress upon prayer as an indispensable condition of promoting the revival. The atonement of Jesus Christ, His Divinity, His Divine mission, His perfect life, His vicarious death, His resurrection, repentance, faith; justification by faith, and all kindred doctrines, were pressed home, and were manifestly made efficacious by the power of the Holy Ghost.³⁹

Finney concludes in his memoirs that the means used during that service was simply preaching, corporate and private praying, and personal conference meetings for consultations on discipleship.⁴⁰ As documented in Finney's memoirs, the common practice before each of the services that resulted in a revival experience was prayer for

³⁶ Old, *The Modern Age*, 450.

³⁷ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 35.

³⁸ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 538, Kindle.

³⁹ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 538, Kindle.

⁴⁰ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 538, Kindle.

forgiveness of sins, prayer for conversion, and prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.⁴¹

Prayer before Service

Indeed, Finney acquired many opportunities to preach in various gatherings, meeting houses and government offices. This very much qualified him to become an ordained minister, which is a requirement in the denominational bylaws for preparing new ministers to become pastors. Furthermore, Finney's empowerment by the Holy Spirit confirmed his calling to become an ordained minister. This quote from Finney affirms the importance of engaging the Holy Spirit in prayer to prepare for preaching Christ to a sinful world, "all ministers ought to be so filled with the Holy Spirit that all who hear them preach shall be impressed with the conviction that the truth of God is with them."⁴² This message was evident in Finney's preaching style.

In 1822, the Presbytery accepted Finney's desire to become a candidate for an ordained minister of the gospel. Finney refused to attend Princeton Theology Seminary as he did not believe in the doctrine taught in this seminary. As an alternative, the Presbytery assigned Rev. Gale to oversee Finney's studies to train him on the denominational principals of the Presbyterian Church and the theological doctrines of the gospel.⁴³ However, the views of Rev. Gale on the doctrines of atonement, regeneration, faith, repentance, and several other doctrines did not sit well with Finney; and he refused

⁴¹ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 717, Kindle.

⁴² Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 2139, Kindle.

⁴³ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 45.

to accept them as truth.⁴⁴ Finney and Rev. Gale had discussions on these doctrines almost daily. Although Finney disagreed on all the doctrines mentioned in Rev. Gale's sermons, the one that gave Finney the greatest distress was the doctrine on atonement.

Under Rev. Gale's theology, the atonement of Christ was payment for the sins of the elect, which was completely contrary to Finney's beliefs and understanding. Finney understood from the Bible that the atonement was made for all humankind in that all humankind can receive salvation, it is not just for the elect.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Finney continued his studies under the direction of Rev. Gale, and it was not until 1824 that Finney became an ordained minister to preach the gospel withstanding his controversial views on doctrines.⁴⁶ The very next day, on behalf of Rev. Gale, Finney preached his first sermon as an ordained minister. To Finney's surprise, Rev. Gale blessed his preaching and accepted his theological views as biblical truths, which was something never imagined could ever happen.⁴⁷ Finney did not take credit for his ability to preach with confidence and boldness, but attributed the gift to the direct influence by the Holy Spirit when he says, "without the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit, a man will never make much progress in preaching the gospel."⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 46.

⁴⁵ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 49.

⁴⁶ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 51.

⁴⁷ Finney, *Memoirs of Charles Finney*, 52.

⁴⁸ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 430, Kindle.

Prayer for Revival

Afterward, from 1825 to 1832, when revivals were most prominent, Finney assumed itinerant ministry as an evangelist lighting revival fires around the world. From the many revivals led by Finney, the revival in Rochester, New York, must receive the spotlight. The Rochester revival had unsurmountable success in the history of revivalism compared to the others and demonstrated how the power of prayer contributed to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁹ In the summer of 1831, an Elder from the Third Presbyterian Church of Rochester extended an invitation to Finney to come to Rochester. Due to the many needs the city faced, it was not the ideal place for a revival, so Finney thought, especially when he received other offers.⁵⁰ Finney engaged many of his friends in prayer, and many suggested he should decline and take one of the other offers. Although his friends advised against going to Rochester, God had other plans and quickened Finney's spirit to go. The next day, Finney traveled from New York to Rochester and began preaching at Third Presbyterian Church of Rochester almost immediately upon his arrival. As previously mentioned, before any meeting, Finney engages many in prayer, imploring God for revival and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As a result of prevailing prayer, and Finney's dynamic preaching, the Spirit of God poured into the meetings in miraculous ways.⁵¹ People traveled from various neighboring towns and cities and took the revival fire with them upon their return.⁵² One of Finney's

⁴⁹ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 1225, Kindle.

⁵⁰ Harvey, *Charles Finney*, 148.

⁵¹ Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 883, Kindle.

⁵² Hills, "Biography of Charles Finney," location 945, Kindle.

former opponents to his ministry, Dr. Lyman Beecher, responds in amazement that the revival in Rochester was “the greatest work of God and the greatest revival of religion that the world has ever seen in so short a time. There were reports of over one hundred thousand souls having connected themselves with Churches as the results of that great revival.”⁵³

Now moving away from the itinerant ministry, in 1832, Finney became interim pastor of the Second Free Presbyterian Church in New York City.⁵⁴ After a year of recovering from the outbreak of cholera that plagued the city, Finney resumed the prayer meetings on a limited schedule due to his recovering illness. Once again as a common practice, Finney led daily prayer meetings very early in the mornings for nine days straight.⁵⁵ When it came time for the service, there were approximately two thousand people in attendance.⁵⁶ Once again, the spirit of revival manifested in such a way that church attendance exceeded the capacity of the building, requiring them to purchase a nearby theater in which they named the Chatham Street Chapel.⁵⁷ After a little over three years pastoring in the Presbyterian Church, Finney became discouraged with the bureaucracy of the denomination. Thus, Finney resigned as pastor of Second Free Presbyterian Church in New York City and left to plant and build a Congregational

⁵³ Hills, “Biography of Charles Finney,” location 1225, Kindle.

⁵⁴ Old, *The Modern Age*, 450.

⁵⁵ Hills, “Biography of Charles Finney,” location 1363, Kindle.

⁵⁶ Hills, “Biography of Charles Finney,” location 1442, Kindle.

⁵⁷ Hills, “Biography of Charles Finney,” location 1442, Kindle.

Church in New York in which he named the Broadway Tabernacle with him designated as the pastor.

While still serving as pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle, in 1835, Finney accepted a position as Professor of Theology at Oberlin College on the condition that he would be able to pastor in New York during the fall and teach at Oberlin in the spring.⁵⁸ As the demands for his time at Oberlin increased, it was not long before Finney realized he could no longer split his time between two very demanding ministries. Consequently, Finney resigned as pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle in 1837 to focus his attention to teaching fulltime at Oberlin College. Shortly after his resignation from Broadway Tabernacle, Finney moved his family to Oberlin, Ohio, which became his permanent home.⁵⁹ After serving as a professor of theology for more than fifteen years at Oberlin, in 1851, Finney became the president of Oberlin College. Finney continued traveling around the world teaching, preaching, and leading revivals along the way. Finney was instrumental in leading the great revival of 1857-1858 that swept throughout the Northern states with conversions reported to exceed fifty thousand souls in a single week.⁶⁰ Finney spent the remainder of his life as an editor until his death in 1872.⁶¹

Conclusion

Considering this most impressive picture of the growth of Christianity in the Northern Hemisphere in the nineteenth century, Charles Grandison Finney was one of

⁵⁸ Old, *The Modern Age*, 451–52.

⁵⁹ Old, *The Modern Age*, 451–52.

⁶⁰ Hills, “Biography of Charles Finney,” location 1363, Kindle.

⁶¹ Hills, “Biography of Charles Finney,” location 1395, Kindle.

many great revivalists of his time that did much to shape the Christian church as it is known today. Finney, however, became the instrument that God used to demonstrate the importance of the church to become a house of prayer as a prerequisite for the release of the Holy Spirit to empower believers for service. During the tenure of Finney's ministry, with prayer leading the services, there were outpourings of the Holy Spirit where many responded in repentance of their sinfulness, and many made confessions of faith, resulting in souls added to the body of Christ at every service.

Although Finney experienced much opposition with regards to his theology, preaching style, and the methods used to stimulate revival, he remained humble by positioning himself in prayer to seek help and direction from God to intervene and remove all the roadblocks. With regards to Finney's ministry, prayer was the essential spiritual discipline that provided the strength to implode the land mines of opposition and continue ministry with restored strength. Without prayer, the depletion of his confidence and strength would resolve to weakness and ultimately defeat. To put it another way, "No prayer, no power. Little prayer, little power. Much prayer, much power!"⁶²

Finney gained significant knowledge and experience in Systematic Theology, which became his area of expertise as a theologian, which inspired him to teach others on the doctrines of the Gospel apart from the denominational dogmas. Granted, Finney did not have formal academic training in theology. Hence, he used the recipes written in his heart by the divine inspiration acquired through devoted prayer and searching through his Bible for understanding and discernment.

⁶² Tim Bonney, "No Prayer, No Power. Little Prayer, Little Power. Much Prayer, Much Power!" *Circuitwriter Blog*, June 11, 2013, <https://timbonney.com/2013/06/10/no-prayer-no-power-little-prayer-little-power-much-prayer-much-power/>.

Additionally, there were several arguments introduced by Finney with regards to the conditions for answered prayers and the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. However, for this summation, the focus will be on the lack of answered prayers, which pretty much encompasses the other arguments and is a prerequisite to receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Finney became discouraged and skeptical of biblical truths when he witnessed in prayer meetings the many unanswered prayers. Thus, he studied and prayed for a revelation as to why this continuously happened. First, he began to focus his attention on Matthew 7:7-8 as the way to approach God, “ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened” (Matt. 7:7-8). Secondly, James 4:3 as the conditions that hinder answers to prayers, “You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures” (Jam. 4:3).

When considering prayer in the context of these two scriptures put together, it adds a little more perspective to the approach and to the condition for prevailing in prayer. Prayer is simply talking to God, which is a form of communication. Finney affirms that there is a right way to ask God, and there is a wrong way to ask God. The right way is to pray in faith, expecting to receive an answer from God according to His will.⁶³ Concerning this historical foundation supporting the hypothesis for this project that intercessory prayer empowers ministry leaders for service, Charles Finney confirmed

⁶³ Charles G. Finney, “Power from On High,” *The Works of Charles Finney*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Independent, 1944), location 2752, Kindle.

in the footprints of his ministry that prayer and empowerment from the Holy Spirit are essential elements for ministry leaders.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter will introduce the components of Practical Theology within the empirical-theological framework to engage the methodological processes of the interactive relation between the human spirit and the Spirit of Christ as a source working in the life and ministry of the church. Furthermore, this chapter will examine the types of prayer, the definition of intercessory prayer, authority in prayer, the efficacy of prayer, and the mediation of the Holy Spirit as a foundational component for ministry empowerment.

Within the broad theological landscape of Practical Theology is that of Empirical Theology. Although many scholars in the International Academy of Practical Theology have recently added Empirical Theology within the last fifteen years, it has significant implications within the framework of Pentecostal and Charismatic scholarship, explicitly focusing more on the infilling of the Spirit of Christ and not necessarily addressing the baptism of the Holy Spirit.¹ Thus, the basis for this foundation is to examine how theory leads to practice and how theory and practice sublates into an experience with the Holy Spirit empowering ministry. The key to the empirical theology component in Practical

¹ Mark J. Cartledge, *The Mediation of the Spirit: Interventions in Practical Theology*, Pentecostal Manifestos Series (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 20.

Theology is revelatory experience in ministry imparted by the Spirit of Christ, which Cartledge calls “Spirit-endowed ministry.”²

First, seminary teaches us that theology starts with a question. In support of this project's theme in that intercessory prayer empowers ministry leaders for service, the beginning of this section will introduce a few essential questions related to this theme to reflect on the servanthood of Jesus as the starting point in establishing the theological basis on why we serve and whom we serve in ministry. Subsequently, building on the biblical metaphor of servanthood as demonstrated by Jesus will definitively shape intercessory prayer's theological significance in carrying out God's mission for ministry.

Fundamentally, the empirical component of Practical Theology for this theological foundation connects the theory of servanthood to the praxis of servanthood in revealing that God is central in carrying out the theological task of ministry. What is meant by praxis of servanthood is the process by which the theory of servanthood is enacted, embodied, and realized in ministry.³ Although theory is an important component to ministry practice, and ministry practice is important to theory, neither can stand apart from the hermeneutical process of revelation for ministry as it will only lead to dogmatic methods, techniques, or strategies that makes ministry ineffective. But when ministry embodies the divine process of empowerment by the Holy Spirit, revelation in ministry reveals the will of God for ministry.

² Cartledge, *The Mediation of the Spirit*, 28.

³ Ray Sherman Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 21.

Practical Theology of Ministry

In his book *The Soul of Ministry*, Anderson introduces Practical Theology with the question, "What is ministry?"⁴ In another book, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, Anderson provides perspective to this question by introducing another question "when thinking of the ministry of Jesus, what is the most distinctive aspect of that ministry?"⁵ Anderson further notes that although there were several possible answers from his study, the answers were collectively task-oriented and none of the answers provided the theology of ministry.⁶ Emphatically, all ministry points to and reveals something of who God is. Therefore, the theology of ministry points to the mission and ministry of God through his Son for the world as reflected in John 3:16, "for God so loved the world that he gave his only son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."⁷ Jesus came to us on behalf of the Father's love for the world.

Using John 3:16 as the foundational point in answering questions like: what is ministry, why do ministry, and whom we serve in ministry, we can affirm that it is God who loved the world, sent, gave, and sacrificed his son to redeem the world. Unequivocally, the most distinctive aspect of Jesus' ministry was service to his Father grounded in obedience to his Father. Thus, the theological answer to these questions are well summarized by Anderson, "the ministry of God is to the world, for the sake of the world, and it is in the world that the continuing ministry of Christ is carried out by the

⁴ Ray Sherman Anderson, *The Soul of Ministry: Forming Leader's for God's People*, 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), location 51, Kindle.

⁵ Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, 37.

⁶ Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, 37.

⁷ Anderson, *The Soul of Ministry*, location 66, Kindle.

people of God.” As a servant in God’s ministry, Jesus did nothing unless he was instructed by his Father “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me” (Jn. 5:30). Jesus’ mission was to always seek the will of his Father in all that he did in ministry. Jesus’ ministry did not end at his death and resurrection but continues now in the mission of the church, the dwelling place of the Spirit of Christ.

Ministry is, first and foremost, what God does within the framework of humanity to reveal his existence, nature, and purpose.⁸ Many consider Acts of the Apostle on the day of Pentecost as the beginning point of the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to serve in accomplishing what God has ordained. However, the empowerment of carrying out God’s mission begins in Exodus and continues throughout the Old and New Testaments. For example, take into consideration Moses who received direct communication from God that not only revealed who God is, but God also prepared and equipped Moses to carry out his will for the people of Israel. Signs and wonders surely manifested and Moses became the instrument God used to liberate the people of Israel. Moses’ mission and ministry were to God and his assignments came from God to liberate the people of God. We see in the word that it was God who was sending him, “tell them I AM has sent you” (Ex. 3:14). Throughout Moses’ ministry, God continuously empowered Moses demonstrating his existence through signs and wonders (Ex. 3:19-20).

Undoubtedly, the Bible has many examples of biblical leaders receiving direct communication and divine assistance from God in fulfilling their assignments according to the will of God. Ministry is a divine assignment/calling from God through the Spirit of

⁸ Anderson, *The Soul of Ministry*, location 98, Kindle.

Christ that dwells within believers to carry out the mission of the church.⁹ The empowerment comes into play when we develop a relationship with God to learn of his existence and nature, establishing ministry purpose. Thus, as a form of worship within the scholarship of Practical Theology, prayer brings into fellowship the will of God through the Holy Spirit's empowerment.¹⁰ This type of prayer is a continuous interaction with the Spirit of God, engaging with the human spirit to receive divine wisdom when preaching, direction when leading, spiritual gifts when witnessing, strength to persevere through challenges, and help with many things in ministry while providing insight into the things of God. With prayer being a form of worship within the discipline of Practical Theology, this theological discipline best supports the hypothesis that if ministry leaders will learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, then they will become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to lead in ministry. This brings us to the next section on the theology of prayer.

Theology of Prayer

As already established, all ministry reveals something of God. However, revelation is contingent on developing a relationship with God to get to know God intimately. Intimacy comes with spending extended amounts of time seeking God in prayer and worship, devotional time in his word, and time being in God's presence. Luke chapter eleven notes that Jesus provided several examples of being persistent in prayer, he said "ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will

⁹ Ray Sherman Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 190.

¹⁰ Anderson, *The Soul of Ministry*, location 98, Kindle.

be opened for you.” For everyone who asks receives and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened” (Lk. 11:9-10). The seeking and the asking refer to imploring God himself, and continual-persistent prayer opens the door to where the presence of God dwells.

The beginning process of seeking God is prayer and the results experienced in a life of prayer develops into a love for God and others, which is empowerment for ministry. The concluding message from Jesus relative to the asking is “if one knows what good gifts to give to their children, then how much more will the Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Lk. 11:13). The take-away is that Jesus established that the gift of the Holy Spirit is instituted through purposeful-persistent prayers. Jesus being the eschatological temple, declared the temple of God to be a house of prayer. It was God who established the temple, and it was Jesus who prepared it as a place for believers to dwell in the presence of God.¹¹ Although Jesus departed the earth returning to his Father, his Spirit remains present with us, and he makes intercession to God on our behalf (Heb. 7:25). To put it another way, Jürgen Moltmann notes that “the community and fellowship with Christ, which is the church, comes about in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the church is the eschatological creation of the Spirit.”¹² It is through prayer that brings us into the dwelling place of God through the development of an intimate relationship with God, ultimately leading to the fulfillment of a spirit-filled life in Christ. A life of prayer must always be a life dedicated to a continuous union with Christ, or the apostolic work will be

¹¹ Steven M. Bryan, “The Eschatological Temple in John 14,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 15, no. 2 (2005): 195.

¹² Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, 1st Fortress Press ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 33.

minimal.¹³ The purpose of prayer is found in the will of God, and when we seek the will of God in prayer, we begin to offer ourselves on behalf of others.¹⁴ Indeed, through prayer the offering of one's self on behalf of others will ultimately lead to becoming a witness to the living word of God as found in the testimony of Jesus Christ.¹⁵

The disciples were well aware of the intimate relationship Jesus had with his heavenly Father, as they often witnessed him slipping away to a quiet place for prayer, which resulted in them asking Jesus to teach them how to pray (Lk. 11:1). Jesus taught them how to pray, he taught them what to pray for, the importance of persevering in prayer, and demonstrated through signs and wonders that when they pray, they will become conduits for the power of God. In the book *Standing in the Breach*, Widmer notes that theology and prayer are intrinsically connected, and that intercessory prayer provides an essential hermeneutical key to theology, making it an absolute necessity in biblical theology.¹⁶ Merton notes that, "no one can seek God unless he has already begun to find him, and no one can find God without having first being found by Him."¹⁷ In fact, through the Holy Spirit the church comes to understand the fellowship of Christ, and it is in this fellowship where the manifestation of power from the Holy Spirit takes place.¹⁸

¹³ John J. Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer* (Spencer, MA: Cistercian Publications, 1971), 73.

¹⁴ Edward W. Bauman, *Intercessory Prayer* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1964), 39.

¹⁵ Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 30.

¹⁶ Michael Widmer, *Standing in the Breach: An Old Testament Theology and Spirituality of Intercessory Prayer* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 1.

¹⁷ Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer*, 28.

¹⁸ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, 1st ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 33–34.

Therefore, the ministry of intercessory prayer is indispensable to the church's mission to fulfill God's purposes through the manifestations of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:18).

Historically, through prayer, communication with God was the primary way in which the prophets engaged in human-divine dialogue. The biblical narratives illustrate in several ways how God communicated to humankind, Hebrews 1:1-2 says, "long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son." God speaking to his prophets, Karl Barth alludes to Evangelical Theology in which one responds to the word which God has spoken, still speaks, and will speak again to fulfill his will here on earth as done with Israel and continues to us today.¹⁹ As true believers in the faith, we are compelled to speak freely and boldly about this belief, as Paul affirms when he says, "I believed, and so I spoke; we also believe and so we speak" (2 Cor. 4:13).

Communication was one component of prayer, but communion with God produced the sanctity necessary for achieving a conscious union with God. This direct, immediate, prophetic communication with God through prayer required the intimacy and relationship with God to reveal his will directly into the believers' hearts.²⁰ Fundamentally, this intimate relationship connected humankind to God and God to humankind. However, within the twenty-first-century, prayer appears to be insignificant in the churches, and many scholars indicated that many professing Christians do not pray at all.²¹ Instead of attempting to diagnose the lack of prayer, it would be most effective

¹⁹ Barth, *Evangelical Theology*, 20.

²⁰ Jon Ruthven, *What's Wrong with Protestant Theology? Tradition vs. Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word and Spirit Press, 2013), 35.

²¹ J. G. Millar, *Calling on the Name of the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Prayer* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 231.

and plausible to emphasize the efficacy and usefulness of prayer as a daily practice within the lives of believers. That being the case, the next section will succinctly define the types of prayers using examples found in biblical narratives to establish the foundation for introducing intercessory prayer.

Types of Prayer

Prayer introduces an understanding of the things of God, and it is one of the main tasks of Christian responsibility. We can see in the word of God, that we are commanded to pray, “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6). There are several types of prayers illustrated in scripture with some of the most commonly known prayers being prayers of praise, thanksgiving, adoration, prayers of agreement, confession, forgiveness, supplication, just to name a few. Thus, different forms of prayers add different meanings depending on the context. For example, if it is a prayer of thanksgiving, the context of the prayer will incorporate giving thanks to God. The other types of prayers will follow the same method. For a basic understanding of prayer, all types incorporate a yearning for God’s presence, a surrendering of oneself to God, and a form of communication to God. Whereas petitionary types of prayer targets requests and seeks a response to the prayers of requests to God. From the very beginning of humankind, allusions of prayer existed in the first few chapters of Genesis. Specifically, Genesis 4:26 has the first recording of prayer which notes after the birth of Enosh, the

people began to call on the name of the Lord.²² Enosh in Hebrew (אֵנוֹשׁ) means “man.”²³ Enosh was the first son of Seth, who was the third son of Adam after the death of Abel (Gen. 4:25). The Bible does not provide why the people called on the name of the Lord. However, implications suggest that this was the beginning of public worship to God as YHWH.²⁴ Additionally, “calling on the name of the Lord” was a way of saying that the people petitioned God through prayer. Petitionary prayer basically means a request made to God for a specific reason believing that God would hear and answer. The types of prayers listed above are not all-inclusive but mentioned to build the foundation for intercessory prayer study, which is the focus of this chapter.

Definition of Intercessory Prayer

Analogous to the other types of prayers identified above, the key difference in intercessory prayer is that it adds the dimension of standing before God on behalf of others.²⁵ The word intercession is derived from the Latin term “*inter*,” which means between and “*cedere*,” which means to go forming the literal meaning of go-between.²⁶ Although intercessory prayer is not listed explicitly in the Bible as a spiritual gift, it is a role expected for all believers to perform.²⁷ When God calls one to move into the

²² Millar, *Calling on the Name of the Lord*, 20.

²³ Richard S. Hess, “Enosh (Person),” in *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 526.

²⁴ Widmer, *Standing in the Breach*, 2.

²⁵ Widmer, *Standing in the Breach*, 6.

²⁶ C. Peter Wagner, *The Prayer Shield: How to Intercede for Pastors and Christian Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2014), location 282, Kindle.

²⁷ Cindy Jacobs, *Possessing the Gates of the Enemy: A Training Manual for Militant Intercession*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen, 2009), 57.

ministry of intercessory prayer, it is usually a consecrated place away from the attention of the day-to-day activities of the church. It is also to note that when operating in the office of an intercessor, it comes with great responsibility in order to execute God's strategy on behalf of the people, church, country, and often nations.²⁸ The internal transformation process that takes place through the intimacy of intercessory prayer produces a deep sense of genuine love for others instituted by the Spirit of Christ that dwells within. This means that the intercessor becomes God's agent of charity to offer divine intervention exhibiting a supernatural anointing on behalf of the people. Indeed, this is a remarkable analogy to consider being an instrument in which God channels the Spirit of charity that others may experience the love of God.²⁹ Notably, Hebrews tells us that Jesus became the intercessor (the one who stands in the breach) on behalf of humankind, as quoted in Hebrews, "consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Thus, a conclusive definition of intercessory prayer is essentially a petitionary-type prayer that brings one to develop a conscious union with God in Christ connected with a union of supernatural charity for others.³⁰ By way of this definition, it is most important to consider prophetic intercession of the Old Testament prophets as it is pivotal for gaining understanding in the work of Jesus as the great intercessor for humankind.³¹

²⁸ Jacobs, *Possessing the Gates of the Enemy*, 34.

²⁹ Bauman, *Intercessory Prayer*, 15.

³⁰ Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer*, 51.

³¹ Widmer, *Standing in the Breach*, 507.

Prophetic Intercession

The Old Testament primarily ascribes prophetic intercession to Israel's prophets who stood in the breach and prayed for ancient Israel. Additionally, consider the call for an intercessor where God looked for someone who was spiritually faithful and grounded in genuine love willing to stand in the breach for the Nation of Israel to execute God's redemptive plans. In this call, God spoke to Ezekiel regarding judgment against Israel's wickedness, and because of his mercy, God sought to find a man who would make a wall and stand in the breach on behalf of Israel, but God could not find anyone (Ez. 22:30). As a result, God poured out his anger on them and consumed them with fire (Ez. 22:31).

On the contrary, the typology in biblical history denotes several prophets and patriarchs who stood in the breach on behalf of a sinful nation that resulted in receiving God's divine mercy instead of his wrath. Indeed, one of the key revolutionary events in biblical history that has important implications for understanding prayer, is Moses' encounter at the burning bush, where he entered the presence of God seeking understanding from the vision of a bush on fire but was not consumed.³² After Moses moved closer to the burning bush, God initiated dialogue with Moses revealing his will in unprecedented ways. As a result of Moses' continued dialogue with God, Moses accepted the responsibility to lead the people out of Egypt over to the promised land (Ex. 3:4-21). A Psalm affirms Moses' position in fulfilling the vocation of an intercessor in that Moses stood in the breach many times before God on behalf of the people to keep God from destroying them (Ps. 106:23). According to Exodus chapter thirty-three, Moses often

³² Widmer, *Standing in the Breach*, 11.

retired to the temple of meeting located outside the camp to pray, and upon entering, the glory cloud would descend over the entrance of the tent where the Lord would speak with Moses (Ex. 33:9). Eventually, Moses' dialogue with God developed into a long-term intimate relationship where God knew Moses by name, found favor, and demonstrated supernatural power and authority through Moses as a leader of the people (Ex. 33:12).

Equally important to also introduce is a more contemporary lens in understanding prophetic intercession. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that will introduce an unction to pray for a circumstance or situation that either has not taken place or for something in which there is not much knowledge in the natural.³³ Cindy Jacobs summarizes this as an assignment to pray for the desires and burdens on God's heart.³⁴ Interesting to note that this definition depicts the assignment given to Moses and many other patriarchs standing in the breach as a prophetic intercessor. Consider the following example provided by an intercessor in need of selling his property to move his Christian organization to another location.³⁵ At the beginning of the prayer, the power of the Holy Spirit intercepted his petition to God, shifting his prayers by providing divine insight into the would-be buyer and declaring the buyer to come immediately. Remarkably, within a few minutes of making the declaration for the would-be buyer to come forth, a buyer walked through the door, and made an offer to purchase the property. It may seem to some that this testimony on prophetic intercession is unnatural based on lack of knowledge in how God operates in the ministry of intercessory prayer. In response to

³³ Jacobs, *Possessing the Gates of the Enemy*, 138.

³⁴ Jacobs, *Processing the Gates of the Enemy*, 138.

³⁵ Dutch Sheets, *Authority in Prayer: Praying with Power and Purpose* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2006), 94.

lack of knowledge, God does not operate in the natural, but the supernatural. The shifting in prophetic intercession moves the prayers into the spiritual dimension guided by the Holy Spirit connecting to the supernatural power and authority that governs.³⁶ The value in prophetic intercession has limitless possibilities for the church today and is necessary to move and operate under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Authority in Prayer

In these challenging times in which we live, it is absolutely vital to understand what it means to have authority and exercise authority when we pray, inviting the Holy Spirit to move with power as we pray. Before introducing biblical examples on the concept of power and authority, it is important to note that authority and power are very different in terms of carrying out the will of God. Authority is the right or, from a biblical perspective, permission from God to do something or rule, and power is the strength or, from a biblical perspective, the force behind the action to perform.³⁷ As such, Jesus imparted authority to us to perform and gave clear direction on the extent of that authority over Satan's power,³⁸ "I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you" (Lk. 10:19).

Moreover, Jesus demonstrated how to exercise authority that results in victory over the devil's work and power. For instance, consider the biblical narrative where the disciples were unable to heal the boy possessed with an unclean spirit, thereby requiring

³⁶ Sheets, *Authority in Prayer*, 14.

³⁷ Sheets, *Authority in Prayer*, 24.

³⁸ Sheets, *Authority in Prayer*, 63.

Jesus to take authority and rebuke the unclean spirit demanding it to leave the boy and never return (Mk. 9:25). After Jesus delivered the boy from the unclean spirit, the disciples inquired privately as to why they were unable to perform the deliverance. Jesus answered that this type of deliverance could only take place through prayer (Mk. 9:29).

To further emphasize, without seeking the will of God in prayer, without engaging the Holy Spirit in prayer, without the anointing received from prayer, our witness is far less effective, and we are more vulnerable to attacks from the enemy.³⁹ When we witness, we need to receive direction and support of the Holy Spirit for pulling down the strongholds of Satan.⁴⁰ The word of God tells us that “the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds” (2 Cor. 10:4); and that it is the Spirit of God who will work for us, “not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit” (Zech. 4:6).

Furthermore, it is important to note that God has given us the authority to be effective witnesses for the Great Commission.⁴¹ This is evident in the Gospel of Matthew, where Jesus commissioned the disciples to go, affirming that all authority of heaven and on earth had been given to him (Matt. 28:18). Securing this authority as the Son of Man had great significance as it released God’s power to those whom God commissioned as an instrument to carry out the will of God on earth.⁴² Karl Barth describes this authority for the Great Commission as a human response that has a

³⁹ Bauman, *Intercessory Prayer*, 59.

⁴⁰ John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2014), 23.

⁴¹ Wimber and Springer, *Power Evangelism*, 11.

⁴² Sheets, *Authority in Prayer*, 40.

transformative impact through the power of the Holy Spirit in response to the word of God authenticated in Jesus Christ.⁴³ To affirm this authority, the word of God assures us that we have the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:19), which is a symbol of governing authority with legislative power to open and close, to lock and unlock, to bind and release God's will on earth as it is in heaven.⁴⁴ This is what it means to exercise authority when we pray.

Consequently, Jesus assured the disciples that he would send them power from on high as a helper for equipping them for the work of the ministry (Lk. 24:49). Indeed, the primary purpose of receiving this power is for the mission of being a witness to win souls to Christ.⁴⁵ Concerning this, consider Paul as a witness in the establishment of the early church where he notes that when "Jesus ascended above the heavens he gave gifts to equip believers for the work of the ministry for the purpose of building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12). Preparing for the ministry or a mission as witnesses, we must speak the word of God boldly with authority and respond in faith.⁴⁶ There is power in the word of God, and the ability to speak boldly comes as a result of engaging the Holy Spirit through intercessory prayer. For example, in Acts 4:29-30, the believers targeted their prayers, specifically asking God for the ability to speak the word with all boldness. Additionally, Paul requests his followers to pray for him to speak with boldness, "Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with

⁴³ Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 16.

⁴⁴ Sheets, *Authority in Prayer*, 70.

⁴⁵ L. R. Scarborough, *How Jesus Won Men* (New York, NY: George H. Doran Company, 1926), 31.

⁴⁶ Sheets, *Authority in Prayer*, 100.

boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak” (Eph. 6:19-20). As previously established, to be a witness in the ministry of making disciples, we must engage the Holy Spirit in prayer to have authority to use our spiritual weapons given to us by Jesus.⁴⁷

Efficacy in Prayer

There are countless testimonies from people who experienced supernatural answers to prayers, whether miraculous healings, divine transformations, or prophetic words of knowledge. Some may attribute healing to the medical treatment, or say it was by happenstance that such encounters occurred. That may very well be, but it is important to note that even medical treatment and the logic in happenstance fall under God’s control, and he still gets the glory. Bauman notes that the laws of nature identify that things happen without knowing why and how they happen; things just happen.⁴⁸ Things happen because God allows them to happen in accordance with his will, plans, and purposes. So, the theological question on prayer is, what evidence would affirm efficacy in prayer? The answer to this question is simple; the affirmation of efficacy in prayer is in the will of God.⁴⁹ As the word of God provides this assurance that, “if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him” (1 Jn. 5: 14-15). Certainly, it is unreasonable to think that because of this assurance to use prayer as an attempt to

⁴⁷ Sheets, *Authority in Prayer*, 76.

⁴⁸ Bauman, *Intercessory Prayer*, 24.

⁴⁹ Bauman, *Intercessory Prayer*, 39.

influence God in any way, as efficacy can only come if it lines up with the will of God.⁵⁰ Moreover, we learn of God's will through prayer, and it is through prayer that we are able to activate God's will by making our requests known to him, as so eloquently uttered by Jesus, "not my will, but yours be done" (Lk. 22:42). In like manner, it is equally important to provide insight into what hinders efficacy in prayers.

In the New Testament, the word of God cautions against the lack of prayer or not praying according to his will as noted, "You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures" (Jam. 4:2-3). The lack of prayer and not praying in faith hinders our ability to receive efficacy in prayers. Additionally, Jesus said in teaching his disciples that if we ask anything in his name, he will do it (Jn. 14:14). This is not merely a vocal expression as often recited as "in the name of Jesus," but this is coming to Jesus as the divine intercessor with a humble spirit as a representative of being a part of the Holy priesthood of Christ. Anyone who prays in the name of Jesus prays with a level of faith and love because of the connectedness to the one who carries the name Jesus. Murry says that it is only in a life full of the Holy Spirit that the power of asking and receiving comes into existence.⁵¹

Empowerment from the Holy Spirit

As believers, we accept and know that God reveals himself to humankind through his Spirit, to bring believers to the beginning of a new life in fellowship with Christ. As a

⁵⁰ Andrew Murray, *The Ministry of Intercession* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2001), 125.

⁵¹ Murray, *The Ministry of Intercession*, 8.

result of this new life in Christ, the Spirit's indwelling in the hearts of believers performs the cleansing process resulting in the dissolution of the innermost self to make room to continuously receive the outpouring of the Spirit.⁵² Paul notes, “God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom. 5:5). That is to say, the glorification of God, the Father, is through the Son in the Holy Spirit.⁵³ To encounter this infilling, believers must live a full Christian life in such a way that the union with God will institute a conscious transformation spiritually as well as psychologically through the work of the Holy Spirit. Hence, through the inner process of transformation, believers transcend their empirical selves and become their true selves in the image and likeness of God.⁵⁴

In the Gospel of John, Jesus metaphorically alludes to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as living water, “out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water” (Jn. 7:38). The living water motif has significant implications for the spiritual body when compared to the physical body. Ecologically, the physical body requires proper nourishment to promote growth and good health, with water being a vital ingredient for all life forms. Since the physical body is an ecological system made up of 60% water, the lack of this vital ingredient will cause the body to deteriorate, malfunction, and potentially lead to death.⁵⁵ Likewise, the spiritual body requires the proper nourishment to promote spiritual growth and invigorate the soul, with living water being the vital

⁵² Thomas Merton, *Life and Holiness* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1990), 86.

⁵³ Widmer, *Standing in the Breach*, 31.

⁵⁴ Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer*, 20.

⁵⁵ USGS, “The Water in You: Water and the Human Body,” Water Science School, 1, <http://www.usgs.gov>.

ingredient for all believers. The absence of living water for the soul will lead to spiritual death. John tells us that the flow of living water is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those who believe (Jn. 7:39). Jesus proclaimed that believers can now drink the water of salvation that flow from him. Those who receive the living water from Jesus have the Holy Spirit in their hearts, and the water becomes a spring gushing up to eternal life.⁵⁶ There must be a connection to the source to receive the Holy Spirit as depicted in the living water motif.

To establish this cohesive connection is through faith in Jesus as the source to begin the process of becoming one in Christ. Jesus illustrates this cohesive connection using the vine motif, “abide in me, as I abide in you...I am the vine, you are the branches,” (Jn. 15:7) to depict how the branch (the spiritual body) connects to the vine (the Holy Spirit is Jesus). This cohesive connection to the vine depicts our spiritual connection first with Christ, then to each other united in fellowship through Christ. This bonding united in fellowship one with another takes place through the transformation process made possible by faith through the death of Christ, whereas we are one with the resurrected Christ.⁵⁷ Paul says, “I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God” (Gal. 2:20). Being crucified means a complete detachment of self-will and a complete surrender of all self-will to the will of God.⁵⁸ This spiritual

⁵⁶ John Barton and John Muddiman, *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 976.

⁵⁷ Stephen D. Lowe and Mary E. Lowe, *Ecologies of Faith: How Christians Grow Spiritually in a Digital Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 6.

⁵⁸ Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer*, 90.

death, as described by Paul, can only be possible through the move of the Holy Spirit as the enabler. In this, Paul expresses his assurance of his oneness with Christ by taking on the sufferings and death along with the power and blessings of that death. Union with Christ is the foundation of communion with others.⁵⁹ To further support this statement, Paul illustrates this union, “for if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Rom. 6:5). The fellowship between Christ’s sufferings and our sufferings are one, and the new life is the resurrection of his life within us. Again reflecting on the vine motif, the union has to be made conformable to Christ’s death. Murry has an excellent illustration of this connectedness; “through the crucifixion, Christ was wounded, and in his open wounds, a place was prepared for us to be grafted in.”⁶⁰

In this depiction of the grafting process, it illustrates how the work of the Holy Spirit enables us to grow in the image and likeness of Christ because we have been made one with him through his death. One who lives a life of consecrated connectedness in Christ can execute petitions to God with such great faith of knowing that God will do it as noted in John chapter fifteen, “if you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (Jn. 15:7).

Consequently, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit facilitates a spiritual union in that believers become identified with Christ. Whereas believers receive the Spirit of Christ that makes them capable of achieving a true likeness to God.⁶¹ Considering this union,

⁵⁹ Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer*, 106.

⁶⁰ Andrew Murray, *Abide in Christ: Your Guide to Unspeakable Joy* (Radford, VA: Wilder Publications, 2018), location 44, Kindle.

⁶¹ Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer*, 14.

Nouwen notes the original meaning of the word theology was union with God in prayer.⁶²

Intercessory prayer opens the flood gates of heaven to facilitate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a form of empowerment. The empowerment of the Holy Spirit is essential to the effectiveness in ministry to spread renewal of the church enabling the body of Christ to operate in the fullness of the Spirit's gifts. Jesus instructed the disciples to wait for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit before witnessing to others. Through this infilling, the Holy Spirit speaks, leads, directs, and manifests the gifts of the Spirit releasing them to fulfill the ministry of the gospel to those in need.

Conclusion

Practical Theology within the framework of Empirical Theology teaches practical methods for engaging the human spirit with the Spirit of Christ for empowerment in ministry. Likewise, intercessory prayer is fundamentally a spiritual discipline of consecrated prayer that facilitates an encounter of divine connectedness of being one with Christ and one with each other in a community of faith grounded in love. Specifically, this connectedness within the community of faith is the process by which God in Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit forms a connection by his presence and the blending of his character within our spirit forming the body of Christ that we now know as the Church.⁶³ Notably, everything that Christ is, we become in that we grow in the image and likeness of Christ because we have been made one with him through his death. As we

⁶² Widmer, *Standing in the Breach*, 2.

⁶³ Paul Pettit, ed., *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming like Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008), 112.

develop in the fullness of our faith as believers, then the move of the Holy Spirit inspires us to live out that faith in service to others.⁶⁴

This divine connectedness developed in prayer provides clarity in the things of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that guides and empowers on how to perform the collective work within the ministry of believers operating in the body of Christ. As such, the infilling of the Holy Spirit equips believers for witnessing and ministry. Hence, intercessory prayer institutes the continuous infilling of the Holy Spirit and provides divine wisdom and discernment in knowing how to pray the will of God, how to persevere until God responds, and most importantly how to pray for others. Additionally, the goal of this connection with Christ is to become part of God's infinite love for others and begin to bear the burden for reaching lost souls with the desire to reveal who God is to be a blessing to all.

The word of God tells us that humankind was born into sin and sin separates us from God. Therefore, humankind requires a Savior to stand on our behalf before God. Thus, the intercessor takes on the position of standing in the breach between the people in need and God who has the power to rectify the consequences of sin and show mercy. To further illustrate, by standing in the breach, the intercessor takes the position as a spiritual mediator between the people in need before God who has the power to show mercy or exercise wrath.

The most underutilized source of spiritual power in the church today is the ministry of intercessory prayer.⁶⁵ Consequently, there is increased complacency and

⁶⁴ Stephen D. Lowe and Mary E. Lowe, *Ecologies of Faith: How Christians Grow Spiritually in a Digital Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018), 151.

⁶⁵ Wagner, *The Prayer Shield*, location 157, Kindle.

diminished spiritual power needed for ministry effectiveness. Thereby, the goals and objectives for this ministry project is training in the practice of intercessory prayer will help ministry leaders establish an understanding the Practical Theology of ministry, will introduce the practice of intercessory prayer as a method for engaging the Holy Spirit and will introduce basic principles to teach ministry leaders in knowing how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers for ministry, for life and for others. Furthermore, the training will introduce the concept of the infilling of the Holy Spirit as foundational for ministry leaders to become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to lead in ministry. John 14:26 says, “The Holy Spirit will teach you everything, and remind you of all that Jesus has said to you.” All prayer is essential and has its place and purposes for application in Christian living. However, it is the prayer of intercession that goes beyond ritualistic practices found in ecumenical prayers and brings one into a direct union with Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter will examine the interdisciplinary foundation of communication as it relates to developing an intimate relationship with God through prayer in support of the theme that intercessory prayer empowers ministry leaders for service. The validity of the discipline of communication being an interdisciplinary field of study for prayer is that the most simplistic definition of prayer is communication with God.¹ Although communication in prayer is applicable to various religious types, the focus for this foundation will be on Christian prayer processes, methods, and expressions of prayer embedded within the communication process.

Scientific research on prayer as a social phenomenon linking the psychological (faith) and sociological (community) disciplines continue to evolve while uncovering multiple meanings for prayer based on the many perspectives that can inform and influence the definition of prayer to establish a basic understanding.² Seemingly, within the communication context, prayer is a process that maintains a dialogical relationship

¹ E. James Baesler, "An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication: Functions, Contexts, and Possibilities," *Journal of Communication and Religion*, no. 3, vol. 35 (2012): 204, https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/communication_fac_pubs/10.

² E. James Baesler, "Exploring Interdisciplinary Prayer Research in a Health Context," *Journal of Communication and Religion*, no. 31 (2008): 25, https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/communication_fac_pubs/6.

between God and humanity. From a broader perspective on the social scientific study of prayer, the conceptual definition of prayer is a type of spiritual communication between humans and a divine being. To illustrate the dialectical relationship between humanity and God, consider seeking God through the word of God as a form of communication with God. On one side of the spectrum is the written word of God (theory); on the other side, there is the human application of the word (practice), and the dialectical component central to the relationships within this spectrum is the living Word (Holy Spirit). The living Word as communicated is the praxis that provides divine influence in delivering the word (experience). In each component, there is a form of communication that empowers for ministry, produces remarkable results in ministry, and inspires those receiving ministry. The concept of the dialectical relationship between the written word and the living Word is best captured in the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Notably, just before Jesus began his ministry, he first received the baptism by water, baptism in the Spirit then led into the wilderness where the devil tempted him. Jesus responds to the first temptation in Matthew 4:4, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." This passage clearly states that the written word does not stand alone, but it is the living Word that activates the authority in the written word. In this case, Jesus responded with authority from hearing the voice of God rebuking the deceptive practices of the enemy. It is the word of God that brings us into the presence of the loving Word of God that enables us to hear God. God affirms his word in us by speaking to us. Prayer without ceasing means to always be in direct communication with God in life and in ministering. We cannot hear God if we do not pray.

Variations of prayer methods range far beyond the more common-type prayers, such as petitionary-type prayers to God or corporate-type prayers in service to God, to the mystical-type prayers of talking and listening to God in contemplation, meditation, devotional Bible reading and journaling as examples.³ Expressions of prayer exist in art forms like music, poetry, painting, dance, and various methods to express adoration to God.⁴ Aforementioned, the conceptual definition previously provided on prayer in the context of spiritual communication, the basic definition of communication in its unadulterated form, is sending and receiving information.⁵ However, these basic definitions of communication do not consider the complexities and interconnectedness in the world around us, thus leaving a communication gap in-between the endpoints, which are the process and action variables such as “to understand and be understood.”⁶ For example, communication across cultures, social groups, and religious affiliations is dynamically complex, even more so in spiritual communication. Therefore, the words used when communicating must be carefully chosen before the message can be understood.

Fundamentally, the social scientific process of the communication process embedded within the contextual behaviors is the choice of words used to transmit a message. In the science of communication, words form meaning, punctuation provides

³ Baesler, “Exploring Interdisciplinary Prayer Research,” 25.

⁴ Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research,” 203.

⁵ Erich Toll, *Intercultural Communication* (Boulder, CO: Big World Media, 2005), video, 1:45, <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/watch/intercultural-communication>.

⁶ Toll, *Intercultural Communication*, 3:05, <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/watch/intercultural-communication>.

inflection, and voice relay emotion. According to Liberman, words do not have meaning unequivocally in themselves as it is the syntagmatic structure of putting words together that form the logic serving as the vehicle to communicate meaning.⁷ In other words, it is putting words in context with other words creating a phrase that gives the meaning of the words. Moreover, meaning and understanding are the two very important components in the science of communication. However, in spiritual communication, meaning and understanding centers on revelatory discernment through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, “call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know” (Jer. 33:3). As previously illustrated in the beginning ministry of Jesus, revelatory discernment in reading the written word of God to develop understanding coupled with receiving the living Word of God elucidates the message from the word making it applicable for today. It is only in seeking God in prayer for wisdom enables understanding in how to accurately apply the text for today, “if any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you” (James 1:5).

Additionally, hearing and listening in the science of communication are basic components in establishing meaning and understanding when communicating. Hearing is a function of perceiving sound in communication, whereas listening is the comprehensible communication process that receives and responds to sound. To further clarify, thoughts experienced while listening often produces a cognitive response to what is being heard. For example, a cognitive response in prayer could be an overt display of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit where some would experience weeping, heat,

⁷ Kenneth Liberman, *More Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013), 135.

laughter, gifts of speaking in other tongues, and many other manifestations. Hearing and listening has significance in prayer as there is an affirmation that you have God's attention and God has your attention which leads to dialogue with Gods, "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me" (Rev. 3:20). Furthermore, listening to the voice of God is the source of wisdom as so noted, "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2:6). To put it another way, the prophetic revelation of God to humankind can only happen through hearing the voice of God, "my sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me" (Jn. 10:27). Undoubtedly, humankind must develop a conscious attitude in prayer to listen, and surrender to God, acknowledge God as God, and develop a deep yearning for union with God to hear and obey him.⁸

Likewise, consider John 14 as the basis for assurance of answers to prayers. When Jesus prepared his disciples for his departure from the earth, he unveiled the mysteries of his divine nature being from the Father. Jesus is the power behind the signs and wonders from the indwelling of the Father, and the promise of another Helper he leaves with those who follow him and believe (Jn. 14:7-18). Finally, Jesus assured the disciples to all who believe greater works they will perform, and as representatives of Jesus who is in the Father and the Father in him, anything that the believer asks in his name, he will do (Jn. 14:12-14). Prayer positions us to the place of intimacy with God to receive divine assurance and understanding when we pray.

⁸ John J. Higgins, *Merton's Theology of Prayer* (Spencer, MA: Cistercian Publications, 1971), 52.

There is much debate from many cessationists who believe that God does not speak to humankind today, and answers to prayers are merely coincidental.⁹ God still manifests today through various forms of spiritual communication in humankind, providing direction denoting his will through prayer. God speaks to humankind in many ways, such as through the word, impressions or senses, visions, and dreams, through worship, through other people, supernatural encounters, and through hearing the audible voice of God.¹⁰ Hearing the voice of God is providential in establishing instructions for life as the word informs that “we live by every word from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). Jesus demonstrated this in his ministry and affirmed this to his disciples when he says, “that he does nothing on his own, but only what his Father instructs” (Jn. 5:19). Nevertheless, if Jesus lives in us, and is considered the Great Apostle, then the voice of God remains today through the Holy Spirit, which is much different from what the original twelve disciples experienced. After the resurrection of Jesus, the Spirit of the Trinity, which is the Son, the Father, and the Holy Spirit is now available to us. With that comes the gifts of the Spirit that empower us through the voice of God to carry out the mission of the gospel. Therefore, communication is foundational to hearing and listening to the voice of God in prayer.

⁹ Jon Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles* (Tulsa, OK: Word and Spirit Press, 2011), location 311, Kindle.

¹⁰ Margaret M. Poloma and Matthew T. Lee, “Prophetic Prayer as Two-Way Communication with the Divine,” *Journal of Communication and Religion* 35, no. 3 (2012): 276, https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/communication_fac_pubs/10.

Communication as a Foundation

Communication Contexts

Context influences communication in various ways. An example of contextual influence is in private or public contexts; a minister praying over an individual in a private-relaxed setting may verbalize the prayer very differently than praying in a public-formal corporate or group setting. The Bible says when one prays, go to a private place, shut the door, and pray to the Father in heaven (Matt. 6:6). A private place is a place of intimacy, a place of humility, and a place of reverence and submission. After Jesus finished praying, a disciple asked Jesus to teach him how to pray (Jn. 11:1). The first petition in the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples is, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). The significance of this petition is that Jesus became heaven on earth – the Emmanuel “God with us” (Matt. 1:23). Believers are also to become heaven on earth through the manifestation of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit after the ascension of Jesus, the Son of God. How can this be possible? The answer to this question is prayer.

To better understand the various contexts that contribute to the sociological component within the communication process, consider the following illustration. In this illustration of a basic conversation between two participants, there is an interpersonal relational context, which is a conversation between at least two communicators where multiple contexts exist. Also, the contexts that are influencing the conversation are the physical context (environment), the individual contexts (experiences), the relational

contexts (relationship) and the cultural contexts (values and behaviors) all contributing to the encoding and decoding of words and gestures (verbal or nonverbal) to arrive at shared meaning (understanding) within the cyclical communication process.¹¹ All contexts in the cyclical communication process can experience some type of noise that could interfere in the decoding process, causing opposing arguments based on experiences, beliefs, cultures, and personal preferences when communicating. Noise, such as word choices, language barriers, use of slang, or interruptions, can exist within each of the contexts mentioned. Similarly, in the spiritual communication process of prayer, noise such as lack of faith, sin, doubt, and mental busyness hinders prayer.

In the following example of communication in a public context, a preacher emphatically communicated from the innermost part of his soul the phrase, “You have not, because you ask not!” The inflection induced in the message and the body language surrounding the message produced an “amen,” indicating a receptive response affirming understanding. In this public context, the preacher delivered a dramatic monologue producing a soliloquy response. Commonly, communicating in a public context is usually a monologue, such as in conferences, lectures, and preaching. Theoretically, this monologue formed a conversation between the speaker and the listeners. In the same way, consider Hannah's monologue prayer in a private context, as an example of active prayer as soliloquy, “Hannah kept on praying to the Lord, and Eli the priest observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard” (1 Sam. 1:12-13).

¹¹ Pamela J. Gerber and Heidi Murphy, *Interpersonal Communication Abridged Textbook* (Albuquerque, NM: Central New Mexico Community College, 2020), 7.

With culture and communication being complex systems that intersect and diverge with many contexts, taking the dialectical approach of the various input and output variables in a discourse offer insight into accepting that everything is not an either or but must incorporate the use of an “and” to link the two opposing endpoints.¹² Therefore, dialectical thinking in communication does not allow for dichotomies like good or evil, right or wrong, male or female, Black or White as these dualistic ways of thinking hinders the ability to see the continuum between the endpoints that can potentially lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding with unexpected results.¹³ Taking these points into consideration, let us examine the dialectical methods in communication as it relates to prayer.

Dialectical Methods in Communication

In the beginning of creation, humankind had one language and one speech making it easy to communicate and understand (Gen. 11:1). The complexities of having various languages did not exist until God confused the language, leading to today's many languages (Gen. 11:9). Thus, in the art of conversation, effective communication requires a dialectical approach in adapting to relational communication styles moving beyond personal viewpoints to incorporate a more diverse interconnectedness between the dynamics of the exchange of information to achieve understanding. Using a dialectic approach in this interdisciplinary research on communication as it relates to prayer will help provide the theory behind the complex social systems embedded in culture, religion,

¹² Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication,” 203.

¹³ Gerber and Murphy, *Interpersonal Communication*, 46.

and communication, allowing for an examination of how the different experiences intersect with the many contexts.¹⁴

There are many philosophical views on the logic of dialectics, and a detailed explanation of the applicable logic around the dialectical methods relative to prayer will follow. However, for purposes of a basic understanding of the dialectic concept, consider the Merriam-Webster definition of dialectic as “a discourse between two or more people of opposing concepts working to establish the truth through reasoned methods of argumentation.”¹⁵ To be concise, to think dialectically means to take into consideration the multiple perspectives that exist relationally between the two opposites or contexts to arrive at a mutual understanding even though there may be contradicting views. The process of dialectics occurs in everyday dialogue such as a conversation, in politics, in religion, in written forms, and various forms of prayer. For example, consider the betweenness of the two opposites of religion versus relationship. On the religion side, we know of God, theoretically, and on the relationship side, we know God intimately. From a dialectical standpoint, both religion and relationship inform and influence one’s spiritual growth. It is very difficult to separate the two as the empirical knowledge is developed from childhood, and if we want to move from that empirical knowledge, it is essential for us to move into a relationship that provides the divine source of that spiritual knowledge.¹⁶ In short, it is not just what you know in religion, but also who you know in

¹⁴ Gerber and Murphy, *Interpersonal Communication*, 46.

¹⁵ Merriam-Webster, s.v. “Dialectics,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dialectics>.

¹⁶ Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909-1936* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997), 131.

relationship that informs. This leads to Hegel's dialectic triadic structure of thought on the relations between two or more variables within the process of communication.

Dialectical Theory

A more detailed analysis of the logic encompassing the dialectic method, which has many applications, is to consider Hegel's theory. The two opposing sides rely on a contradictory process between the opposing sides to establish truth, agreement, or understanding. According to Hegel, the opposing sides are different definitions of consciousness and the object that consciousness is aware of or claims to know.¹⁷ In other words, the different cognitive processes of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought and experiences pass over to their opposites. The subject matter is the object of the discourse, developing into an intellectual exchange of ideas. For instance, there are no wrongs or rights, but a blending of two opposite concepts through the process of sublation as it pushes into the opposites from the moment of understanding.¹⁸ Let us take this a bit further to illustrate the logic as expressed by Hegel's epistemology on how the opposing sides sublate to reach a consensus.

In Hegel's philosophical approach to dialectical theory, the sides are not parts of logic, but moments of conceptually articulated thought in which he considers a

¹⁷ Julie E. Maybee, "Hegel's Dialectics," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Stanford University, Metaphysics Research Lab, 2019, 3, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/hegel-dialectics/>.

¹⁸ Maybee, "Hegel's Dialectics," 5, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/hegel-dialectics/>.

type of cognition capable of having purportedly eternal contents.¹⁹ The cognitive functioning of conceptual thought, for example, would come from experience, culture, religious affiliations, and such within everyday human life. Hegel uses many metaphoric diagrams to argue his phenomenological theory in the process of dialectics. Notably expressed, there were many arguments raised adding to or against Hegel's theory of dialectics, which led to challenges in selecting the best theoretical method for this foundation.²⁰ However, the application of his dialectical theory with regards to spiritual communication best fits this foundation with what he defines as "thesis-antithesis-synthesis" presented as interrelated parts dynamically moving toward a whole truth. Consider Barth's analogy of the antithesis between God and humankind.²¹ The beings are stark opposites, and the process of synthesis brings them together as one, "anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him (1 Cor. 6:17). The synthesis process is the spiritual transformation process. The human's cognitive will transforms to God's will, thereby establishing connectedness with the divine source enabling them to become one, which is necessary for effective ministry. This triadic structure depicting the dialectical process of thought present stages of development as "thesis" the beginning or the starting proposition illustrating a point, "antithesis" is a contradiction or negation of the "thesis, and the final stage is "synthesis" which reconciles the conflict grasping unity between the thesis and

¹⁹ Maybee, "Hegel's Dialectics," <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/hegel-dialectics/>.

²⁰ Lloyd Spencer and Andrzej Krauze, *Introducing Hegel: A Graphic Guide* (London, UK: Icon Book, Ltd., 2012), location 287, Kindle.

²¹ McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 143.

antithesis stages forming a new proposition.²² The key aspects in the dialectical progression of thought are the stages of development over time with an understanding that reality at any given time is always provisional, and transient.²³ Taking these points into consideration, let us examine the dialectical methods in communication as it relates to prayer.

Dialectics in Prayer

The dialectical process of two becoming one is necessary for prayer. As previously mentioned in the section on *Efficacy in Prayer*, praying in the name of Jesus meant that we are declaring that our spirit is one with Jesus. Being one with Jesus means as representatives in the kingdom of God that we have the authority to use the name of Jesus. The synthesis process gives us this authority because we have become children of God (Jn. 1:12). Many pray in need of answers to prayers either demonstrated supernaturally by experiencing a miracle or through a response from hearing the voice of God. Answers to prayers require a communication component contingent on how to pray and a psychological component such as faith in approaching God in prayer. In John's gospel, for example, Jesus presented the vine motif depicting the analogy of divine connectedness through abiding, he declared with assurance that, "if we abide in him, and his words abide in us, ask for whatever we wish, and it will be done for us" (Jn. 15:7). Of course, it is not only in the asking but also in the posture and condition of the heart when approaching God in prayer. As previously mentioned in the dialectics of the word of God,

²² Maybee, "Hegel's Dialectics," <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/hegel-dialectics/>.

²³ Spencer and Krauze, *Introducing Hegel*, location 634, Kindle.

the dynamics of prayer are similar. In prayer, on one side there is the empirical component which we know to be experience, context, what we already know through religious practices, and many other factors that exists when we pray. On the other side there is the spiritual component that is required and necessary to receive divine wisdom into the dialogue bringing the two components together. God provides the spiritual insight through prayer which establishes authority, and authority in prayer results in answered prayers, “Jesus called the disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases” (Luke 9:1).

The system of prayer operates in a contextual dialectic with the core processes being forms of prayer that range from individuals to groups, and functions of prayer as in petitionary and contemplation. Examples of dialectical relationships embedded within prayer processes are private and public, active and receptive, inward and outward, and between prayer processes are input/output variables. As already mentioned, the contextual dialectic connects personal methods of communicating to other contexts to facilitate understanding as well as to adapt to potential contextual differences, which may or may not lead to a shift in personal methods in communicating.²⁴ Paul says that he has “become all things to all people” (1 Cor. 9:22) to mean that even though he has a calling to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, he may shift his message as necessary to reach everyone. Active prayers shift in accordance with the type of prayer, the function of prayer, and the context of prayer. Baesler notes that the conceptual framework for understanding dialectics in the various types of prayers is to put it into perspective of

²⁴ Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication,” 203.

Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory.²⁵ Analogous to the dialectic structure around the many parts in the system of communication, Bertalanffy uses Aristotelian's basic definition in addressing system problems with its holistic and teleological notions, notably the theory that "the whole is more than the sum of its parts."²⁶ To adapt the Aristotelian theory in the application of effective communication, for example, is to become aware of all the parallel factors and the different patterns of interaction, instead of focusing on the small details in isolation. Take, for example, the disciples' inability to cast out the unclean spirit from a child, and their inquiry to Jesus confirmed "this kind can come out only through prayer and fasting" (some translations omit fasting) (Mk. 9:29). The various parts (faith, belief, power, and authority) to successfully execute in prayer is through the relational connection to the Holy Spirit that results from spiritual communication and consecration for service as performed in fasting. The Aristotelian Theory is essential in the sending and receiving process within a discourse to establish an awareness of the individual components of communication that facilitate the encoding before decoding takes place. Hence, in this dialectical structure, the conscious awareness of the transcending parts contributing to the whole within a system of communication provides dimension to the interrelations between the many components of thought, experience, and knowledge in arriving to the mutual dimension of understanding.²⁷ This brings us to examine how the dialectics of reading scripture invites the reader to a meditative form of prayer.

²⁵ Baesler, "An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication," 203.

²⁶ Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, "The History and Status of General Systems Theory," *Academy of Management Journal* 15, no. 4 (December 1972): 407, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/255139>.

²⁷ Bertalanffy, "The History and Status of General Systems Theory," 411.

There is a difference in reading the Bible for purposes of academic study versus reading the Bible for divine revelation into the things of God. Consider the process of reading scripture with care and attention as a form of spiritual communication (prayer), where the dialectical process incorporates the act of biblical reading as a discipline (human responsibility) engaged in dialogue with God for divine inspiration as a dependence (divine sovereignty).²⁸ The dialectical process in this example is the discipline of reading and the dependence on divine inspiration, which moves the reader toward greater belief in the biblical revelation of the text, establishing a greater love of God in the process. We are invited and required to enter divine wisdom through the word of God, which devotional prayer is set out to do. Origen provides a perfect example of discipline and dependence using Psalm 81:10, where the literal text says, “Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.”²⁹ However, the figurative meaning of the text is equivalent to opening the mouth of the soul in the context of prayer for an understanding of scripture as such to receive the infilling of knowledge of the things of God.³⁰ This dialectical process of reading scripture incorporated prayer that produced an experience with the text through God’s divine providence enabling the reader to receive the Spirit’s counsel into the correct interpretation of scripture. The human intellect alone cannot comprehend the profound depths of the divine mysteries of God without engaging in spiritual communication for understanding. It is only God who can provide wisdom as so written,

²⁸ Abe Johnson, *The Dialectical Method of Biblical Exegesis: A Revelation Paradigm for Students Taught by the Holy Spirit Studying Scripture* (Tallahassee, FL: Central Truth Publisher, 2003), 7.

²⁹ “Origen the Reader: Dialectics and Prayer in de Principiis,” n.d., 16.

³⁰ “Origen the Reader,” 16.

“if anyone lacks wisdom, ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given” (Jam. 1:5).

Spiritual Communication

A discourse involves parties who are mutually and reciprocally engaged in dialogue with each other. With prayer being a type of discourse, it is critical to understand the relational parts contributing to the dialogue with that being the relationship with God and one who is praying, the relationship between God and the one prayed for, and finally the relationship between the one praying and those who receive prayer. In this triadic scenario of prayer, God is the conscious focus of all parties in the relational dialogue of prayer. In the study of “Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication,” Baesler accurately captured a summary definition incorporating spiritual communication in Christian prayer as follows:

In the context of a covenant relationship between the Christian and the Holy Trinity, prayer is the Christian’s affirmative response to God’s invitation of love as demonstrated by a conscious focus on the Christian’s attention on the presence of God followed by one or more verbal and/or nonverbal communication processes directed to/with God: talking, listening, dialoguing, meditating, and contemplating which can culminate in the experience of mystical union.³¹

To put it briefly, prayer is a participatory relationship with God, as emphasized by Heschel, “not only in a covenant of mutual obligation but also a relationship of mutual concern” leading to a greater understanding and commitment to the Christian faith.³²

³¹ E. James Baesler, “Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication,” *Journal of Communication and Religion* 2, no. 20 (1997): 9, https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/communication_fac_pubs/9.

³² Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Perennial, 2001), 38.

The significance of spiritual communication with God is not solely the act of talking at God as in the performance of some ritualistic religious duty, but an interactive spiritual activity which brings God and humankind into communion with one another. Studies on prayer through national surveys conducted over ten years revealed empirical evidence that respondent's prayers involved more than one-way communication as in devotional-type prayers but more receptive-type prayers as in divine instruction, direction, and guidance where respondents experienced the presence of God.³³ Getting into the presence of God has vast implications in prayer. As it is only in the presence of God that enables an ongoing prayer dialogue with God, and the act of worship takes place as mentioned in Jesus' prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, requesting the glorification in the presence of God (Jn. 17:5). Access into the presence of God is first through the Logos, that is, in the seeking of who God is; and then through prayer, that is in the asking to get into the presence of God; and finally, the knocking, that is to request access into the presence of God. This entire process of persistent dialogue in spiritual communication transcends all basic forms of prayer and moves one into the spiritual realm where the Spirit of God exists, embarking on a journey into a more relational connection to God in prayer.³⁴

Conclusion

To summarize, all prayer is a form of communication with significant differences in types and forms of prayer. Consequently, this examination of communication as it

³³ Margaret M. Poloma and Matthew T. Lee, "Prophetic Prayer as Two-Way Communication with the Divine," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 35, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 273.

³⁴ Poloma and Lee, "Prophetic Prayer as Two-Way Communication with the Divine," 279.

relates to prayer helps to facilitate an understanding of prayer as a function of spiritual communication. Dialogue with God can only take place through prayer, and the one who is praying believes that God hears and will provide a response. Receiving a receptive response in prayer is not always experienced, but persistent dialogue with God will eventually change from a monologue to relational communication of receiving spiritual direction, guidance, and experience a greater love for God. After engaging in relational communication with God, prayer will become a spiritual discipline where one will experience that God will initiate the call to prayer, will inform how to pray, and will instruct on what to pray. Even though some cessationists believe that God does not speak today, there is much evidence, God still speaks to humankind today through the word of God, through others, and through the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in various ways. As previously mentioned, just as there are differences in the ways in which people communicate, similarly there are differences in the way people engage in prayer, in the way God communicates to humankind, as well as differences in experiences in prayer. Nevertheless, the main purpose of prayer is an attempt to create a meaningful relationship with God seeking spiritual direction and answers to prayers. Although prayer is very similar to human conversation, there are profound differences in experiences between human conversations and dialogue with God. Namely, the transformative internal experiences when seeking divine direction, intervention, answers to prayers, and many other petitions to God. Furthermore, prayer serves a variety of functions, such as petitionary prayer for health during times of illness, prayers of forgiveness, prophetic

prayers for guidance and discernment, prayers for divine intervention, liturgical prayers, and many others that one experiences over a lifespan.³⁵

Studies on human communication show that dialogue is relational between the two communicating endpoints, transmitting words and gestures through cultural, religious, and individual receptors leading to a shared meaning in the process of achieving understanding. Social and communal actions in ministry relies on communication across cultures, disciplines, and religious types. There were multiple contexts identified in the process of human communication that contributed to and introduced complexities inherited from cultural influences, religious influences, and life experiences, making it difficult for the two communicating endpoints to process and achieve understanding. Since prayer encompasses talking, listening, and dialoguing with God, there are similarities between prayer and communication, which also introduces similar complexities. Thus, Hegel's logic on the dialectical method of argument or the contradictory process that takes place between the opposing sides of a proposition shows how a cyclical progression toward mutual understanding cancels out and preserves into their opposites until there is a new proposition. The examples of contextual and functional dialectics found in various types and forms of prayer affirm that interpersonal communication is foundational to a life of prayer. Thus, the intrinsic nature of prayer is spiritual communication with the divine to receive guidance in how to serve in God's kingdom in a mighty way. In order to perform the work of God's heart, the leaders in ministry and those who aspire to be leaders in ministry must begin the process of engaging in intercessory prayer to learn and experience the elements of spiritual

³⁵ Baesler, "An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication," 203.

communication in how to approach and connect relationally with the divine. Living a life of prayer will lead to living a fruitful and healthy life in dialogue with the divine producing a transformative experience for the equipping of the saints with the ability to communicate a life of Christ to others.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

This final chapter provides a detailed analysis of the research methodology and project implementation, followed by a summation of the learnings in support of the hypothesis that if ministry leaders learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, then they will become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to serve. Finalizing the hypothesis led to refining the project title “The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service,” which identifies three key areas of study that built the framework for this research project. First was developing an intercessory prayer model that incorporated training to increase understanding of intercessory prayer, devotional reading, and reflective journaling. The second was to provide prayer tools that reinforced the training through applied learning by engaging in daily devotional intercessory prayer. The third was implementing an intercessory prayer group at the context location, Canaan Baptist Church of New Castle, Delaware, for ministry leaders to engage in active participation in an intercessory prayer group.

Hence, the first building block identified supporting the hypothesis was training on “intercessory prayer.” As explicated in Chapter Two, foundationally, after the cleansing of the temple, Jesus declared that the temple of God is a house of prayer (Matt. 21:12). Furthermore, the word also tells us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy

Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). As the eschatological temple, Jesus now resides within us as the dwelling place of his Spirit for all who believe. This was an important attestation as the ministry of intercessory prayer maintains the communication between the Spirit of God and humankind. Thus, intercessory prayer is the spiritual discipline that seeks the will of God for the people of God, the church, and the community. The objective of the training for this part of the research was to improve the participants' understanding and attitudes towards intercessory prayer to increase their desire to move in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. Additionally, this part of the research using questionnaires will assess and measure the participants' attitude toward the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer before and after the program.

The second building block identified supporting the hypothesis was to engage the participants in the practical application of intercessory prayer by assigning daily devotions, focused prayer assignments using prayer techniques, and reflective journaling. As commissioned by Jesus to execute authority for the mission of making disciples, believers must engage in constant dialog with God to receive instructions, directions, and power to perform the work of the ministry. Intrinsically, intercessory prayer includes the added dimension of evangelism in that the intercessor goes to God on behalf of the people and evangelistically goes to the people on behalf of God. In both instances, there is direct communication with God for the people. This is evident in the prayers of Jesus in the Garden Gethsemane where Jesus goes to God on behalf of the people (John 17:9), and then where Jesus goes to the people on behalf of God (John 17:6). Therefore, through active participation, this part of the research aimed to affirm that intercessory prayer is

vital in leading ministries and should function as a primary tool to carry out God's mission for the church.

The third building block identified supporting the hypothesis was the active participation in an intercessory prayer group to empower ministry leaders for service. As explicated foundationally in Chapter Two, Acts 4:23-31 demonstrates how prayer resulted in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit empowering a community of believers to be bold witnesses of the gospel. Consider the training the disciples received throughout Jesus' ministry preparing them for service after his departure. At the end of their training, and prior to his departure, Jesus left them with three essential commands in preparing them for ministry. First, Jesus commanded the disciples to go and "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). Second, Jesus commanded the disciples to go and "proclaim the kingdom of heaven has come near, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, and drive out demons" (Matt. 10:8). Third, Jesus commanded them to go and "stay in the city until receiving the enduement of power from on high" (Lk. 24:49, Acts 1:4). The takeaway from these commands is, even though Jesus prepared and trained the disciples for ministry, they did not yet have power; that is to say, they needed divine ability, assistance, and authority from God to witness. Therefore, the disciples assembled in a secluded room and prayed until they received the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). Notably, it was through the community of believers united in prayer that engaged the Holy Spirit to clothe them with power to serve as witnesses. These biblical examples confirm that intercessory prayer facilitates the release of the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of believers.

In these challenging times today, the vitality of the church depends on believers dedicated to prayer for equipping the laborers of the church for the harvest of today. When Jesus declared the Great Commission, he also assured the disciples that he would go with them (Matt. 28:19-20). Contemporarily, the practice of intercessory prayer invites Jesus to lead the way and go with us through the manifestation of the Holy Spirit operating in us, enabling us to be witnesses of the good news. The following sections will delineate the details of the three research methods used in this project design, followed by details of the project implementation process, a summary of learning, the results and evaluation of the model, and the conclusion of the findings with recommendations for future implications for ministry.

Methodology

The context analysis of Canaan Baptist Church of New Castle, Delaware, revealed significant growth in many areas of the church's functioning body resulting in increased challenges in leading ministries and added responsibilities on ministry leaders, leading to complacency in some and burnout in others. Challenges in ministry are inevitable, but perseverance comes only through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Just as God gave Moses a staff to equip and empower him to lead, ministry leaders today need empowerment to lead. In his letter specifically addressed to those called to ministry, Jude shifted his salvation message to a message on contending in the faith (Jude 1:1-3). Whereby, in his conclusion, Jude offered an exhortation for those called to ministry to build themselves up in holy faith and to pray in the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20). Jude 1:20 is an allusion to Ephesians 6:17-18, which speaks of growing in faith, studying God's word,

and always praying in the Spirit. Praying in the Spirit is a form of intercessory prayer. As already established, the believers in Acts 4:24-31 experienced the power of prayer when they came together and raised their voices to God, recounting God's sovereignty to deliver as a justification for the urgency to contend in the faith with boldness. God honored their prayers and filled them with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke with boldness. This boldness, in the context of this research, is empowerment. Empowerment for ministry comes from the Holy Spirit, and we engage the Holy Spirit through prayer.

Accordingly, the research design required a minimum of six participants in a six-week study on empowerment for service through intercessory prayer. The targeted study group was ministry leaders or those who aspire to lead in a ministry capacity. The research strategy to affirm the hypothesis used the qualitative research method for data collection from the three areas of study previously mentioned to measure and evaluate the efficacy of the intercessory prayer model for ministry leaders to become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to serve.

COVID-19 Project Adjustments

The data collection strategy defined for this project required developing an intercessory prayer manual and supporting documentation. Thus, before implementing the project, the context associate reviewed a draft of the advertisements, training materials, and surveys. After finalization of the recommended edits, the context associate approved the project as ready for implementation. However, the location of the project became a challenge due to COVID-19 in-person gathering restrictions resulting in a shift in the project timelines and necessary adjustments made to the planned implementation

strategy. Consequently, some of the project materials required conversion into electronic fillable forms using the Adobe application allowing the participants to complete and sign the documents electronically. Additionally, the seminar and training location took place via the Zoom video conferencing solution with interactive capability for remote participation. Therefore, it was necessary to purchase these electronic resources and incorporate them as part of the training deliverables to ensure that all participants knew how to log into Zoom and use the interactive controls.

The second part of the project required a physical location to implement the intercessory prayer group to facilitate active participation. Although Zoom could be an alternative method for implementing an intercessory prayer group, the electronic environment was not a natural setting to satisfy the project objectives and introduced significant limitations as a phenomenological study to efficiently observe shared experiences and group dynamics. Therefore, these limitations impacted the project timelines significantly. However, the necessary adjustments allowed parallel processes to continue. Scheduling and securing the location at the context site took place during the implementation phase upon lifting the COVID-19 restrictions. The following sections will explicate the qualitative research design as implemented for the three study areas and the data collection methods used for each study area.

Intercessory Prayer Seminar and Training

The first area of study for the research design involved a seminar that introduced the participants to the project, project requirements, virtual tools, and expected outcomes. Prior to the implementation of the training, participants took a pre-training survey

comprised of twenty-four questions to establish a benchmark on participant's knowledge level and attitude toward intercessory prayer. The participants took the post-training survey at the conclusion of the project. On a scale of one to five, with one indicating strongly disagree and five indicating strongly agree, the participants answered the weighted questions according to their level of agreement. A checkmark (✓) indicated their responses. See Appendix F for details on the weighted pre-and post-training survey questions. Additionally, the participant's completed a demographic survey (Appendix E) to identify trends in the data based on age, gender, and leadership experience.

After completion of the seminar requirements, participants engaged in interactive training on intercessory prayer. This part of the study aimed to increase the participant's understanding of intercessory prayer, enhance their prayer life, and assess how the training would impact their attitudes toward the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. The training provided biblical teachings on prayer, how intercessory prayer is different from other types of prayers, why intercessory prayer is vital for empowerment in ministry, how the Holy Spirit helps us when we pray, how to petition God, and how to listen for promptings from the Holy Spirit in prayer. This list is not all-inclusive but provides the major areas of the training.

To reinforce participants' learnings and experience with the lessons, the participants completed daily devotional reading homework assignments extracted from the *Prayer of Jabez Devotional* including daily practice in intercessory prayer with journal entries for spiritual development and empowerment.¹ The objective of the

¹ Bruce Wilkinson and David Kopp, *The Prayer of Jabez: Devotional* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2001), 1.

homework assignments was to empower them to grow spiritually and become strengthened to serve as ministry leaders.

Active Participation in Group Prayer

The second area of study for the research design involved active participation in an intercessory prayer group. The participants put into practice the biblical and theological teachings on intercessory prayer that helped them to form a daily habit of intercessory prayer to empower them in their ministries. The prayer group met weekly over the duration of the six-week study, which also incorporated participants leading the intercessory prayer group meetings. The participants practiced petitioning God for the needs of the context, their ministries, and the community of New Castle County, Delaware, to reach the unchurched, the undecided, and the unsaved. This part of the study used empirical data from testimonies written in prayer journal (Appendix H) and from data captured during direct observations of participants leading the intercessory prayer group.

Empowerment of Ministry Leaders

This third area of study for the research design involved the evaluation of how this intercessory prayer model impacted the participants, the ministries they lead, the church and the community they serve. Empowerment is from the Holy Spirit that inspires mindset, motivates, increases confidence, and provides strength to follow through with a task or a service. Participants received an opportunity to experience empowerment through the Holy Spirit in training as well as through the active participation in the

intercessory prayer group. To measure the overall impact of the intercessory prayer model, participants received the post-training survey (Appendix F) and final evaluation (Appendix I) at the conclusion of the study.

Implementation

Due to the required project adjustments resulting from COVID-19 limitations on in-person gatherings, the project implementation resulted in a four-month delay. This delay resulted in revisions to the original project implementation plan reducing the six-week project plan to a four-week project plan, thereby merging six weeks of Intercessory Prayer Training Workshops into three weeks, preserving the full scope of the six-week training plan. Incorporating the Pre-Training Seminar and the Post-Training Project Closure session amounted to a four-week implementation plan.

After the Center for Disease Control (CDC) lifted the in-person gatherings for Delaware State at the end of May and the context adjusted the protocol for in-person gatherings, a meeting took place on Wednesday, July 7, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. with the context associate, Rev. Dr. Christopher A. Bullock, pastor. The context associate reviewed and approved the revised training schedule (Appendix D), training documentation, and identified ten ministries, based on their direct contact with the community, to solicit volunteers for being a part of the study. The details of the logistics were set in motion by scheduling the Zoom recurring meetings and reservations made to secure the use of the sanctuary at the context location for the weekly in-person prayer group meetings confirmed for each Saturday beginning July 24, 2021, through August 7, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

On July 12, 2021, the ministry leaders listed below received an email requesting volunteers for the Intercessory Prayer Research Project attaching the project flyer

(Appendix A) denoting the details about the project:

1. Pastoral Ministry
2. Substance Abuse Ministry
3. Church Administration Ministry
4. Security Ministry
5. Deacons Ministry
6. Greeters Ministry
7. Ushers Ministry
8. Missionaries Ministry
9. Women's Ministry
10. Men's Ministry

The deadline for volunteers to respond was set for Saturday, July 17, 2021. By Thursday, July 15, 2021, ten volunteers responded with a desire to participate. After reaching the required number of volunteers, the ten ministry leaders received a follow-up email thanking them for their assistance in successfully reaching the required number of volunteers ending the solicitation for volunteers.

Confirmation of Volunteers

To confirm participants, all ten volunteers received a welcome letter (Appendix B), a project overview and schedule (Appendix D), and the Human Subject Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) to secure their signed commitment before participating in the study research. Out of the ten volunteers, three had to decline for personal reasons, leaving seven confirmed participants representing the following ministries confirmed:

1. Missionaries Ministry
2. Deacons Ministry
3. Substance Abuse Ministry
4. Women's Ministry
5. Drama Ministry

6. Couples Ministry
7. Young Adults Ministry

Upon receiving the Human Subject Inform Consent Form, each participant received an Intercessory Prayer Training Resource Packet that included the following training materials:

- Participant's Unique Identification Code
- Project Training Schedule
- Intercessory Prayer Training Manual
- Research Project Prayer Journal
- A Purchased Copy of *The Prayer of Jabez Devotional*
- A Purchased Notebook
- Sealed Demographics Survey and Pre-Training Survey
- Sealed Post-Training Survey and Evaluation Survey
- Two Pre-Addressed/Stamped Envelopes for mailing completed forms

Participant's Unique Identification Code

To ensure anonymity, each participant in this human subject research project received a 3 x 5 index card disclosing a unique identification code for them to write on all survey documents and prayer journals. The process used for creating the unique identification codes was as follows:

1. Using Microsoft Excel, copy and paste this formula
=DEC2HEX(RANDBETWEEN(0, 4294967295), 8) into the first cell;
2. Copy the results of the first cell and paste into the number of cells needed to generate unique identification codes.
3. Repeat the steps above for all the required codes.

The above process resulted in the creation of seven unique identification codes as follows: A485D633; 506C4796; C7F4FA78; 5E83483C; ED3543BC; 5AD64560; and

A1F744BD. All references to the participant's survey responses, prayer journal assessments, and final evaluations for the project analysis will use the unique identification codes where applicable.

Pre-Training Seminar Summary

The ninety-minute Pre-Training Seminar took place on Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. and again at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom Video Conferencing. All seven confirmed participants attended one of the two Pre-Training Seminar sessions with three participants in attendance of the morning session and four participants in attendance of the evening session. Each session opened with scripture reading from theme scripture 2 Chronicles 7:14 followed by prayer. The Pre-Training Seminar Agenda was as follows:

- Welcome of Participants
- Review of Zoom Virtual Controls and Meeting Guidelines
- Project Introduction
- Training Resource Packet Walkthrough
- Training Plan and Meeting Schedule
- Introduction to the Study Context
- Practical Steps to Intercession
- Daily Preparation for Prayer
- Video Presentation: Adoration
- Next Meeting Time
- Seminar Conclusion: Q&A and Complete Pre-Training Surveys
- Closing Prayer

The medium used to present the instructional points identified on pages seven through sixteen of the Intercessory Prayer Training Manual was Microsoft PowerPoint presentation slides shared through Zoom Video Conferencing. There were no follow-up questions at the end of the seminar. Therefore, the seminar concluded with the participants receiving instructions on completing the demographics survey and the pre-training survey documents and instructions for mailing the completed documents in the

provided self-addressed, stamped envelope. Also, participants received instructions to journal their learning experiences, observations, and reflections from the Pre-Training Seminar. Closing remarks from participants in both sessions included learning takeaways and expressions of excitement to learn more about growing in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. Following the remarks, the seminar concluded with a closing prayer half past the hour. The following section will provide a synopsis of the implementation of the Intercessory Prayer Training Workshops.

Intercessory Prayer Training Workshops

The Intercessory Prayer Training Workshops began on Tuesday, July 22, 2021, and continued twice a week for three weeks. There was a total of six ninety-minute workshops conducted every Tuesday and Thursday beginning at 10:00 a.m. and again at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom Video Conferencing. A make-up session was also available to the participants, if needed. All seven confirmed participants completed all six Intercessory Prayer Training Workshops.

Microsoft PowerPoint presentation slides shared through Zoom Video Conferencing was the medium used to engage the participants in the six lessons to go along with the Intercessory Prayer Training Manual, Research Project Prayer Journal, *Prayer of Jabez Devotional*, and a notebook. The Research Project Prayer Journal maps directly to the layout defined in the Intercessory Prayer Training Manual to align their responses to the training materials, videos, and the devotional homework assignments. The slides facilitated the ability to enhance the key points graphically and introduced opportunities for interactive discussion. Each of the six lessons incorporated a lesson

theme, a theological question, a key scripture, and the lesson prayer focus. The following table delineates the six lessons as defined in the Intercessory Prayer Training Manual.

Table 3. Intercessory Prayer Training lesson plan

| |
|---|
| Lesson Theme: Principles to Live By “To Know and Obey God’s Will” Lesson One: Why Should We Pray? Key Scripture: Matthew 6:9-13 Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for the Church and Community |
| Lesson Theme: Profession to Live For “To Be a Channel for God’s Love” Lesson Two: What Should We Pray? Key Scripture: Romans 8:26-27 Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Leadership and Ministries |
| Lesson Theme: Purpose to Live Out “To Release God’s Love to Others” Lesson Three: How Should We pray? Key Scripture: Matthew 21:22 Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for the Needs of the Congregation |
| Lesson Theme: Presence to Live With “To Develop Intimacy with God” Lesson Four: When Should We Pray? Key Scripture: Luke 18:1 Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Divine Insight |
| Lesson Theme: Perseverance to Live Through “To Build Faith and Establish Authority” Lesson Five: What Hinders Prayer? Key Scripture: Mark 11:22-24 Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession Against Hindrances |
| Lesson Theme: Power to Live On “To Be Empowered for Service” Lesson Six: Who Helps Us To Pray? Key Scripture: Luke 24:49 Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Revival |

The lesson objectives provided the training framework supporting the three learning pillars on praying Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers. The following table delineates the objectives for each of the six lessons.

Table 4. Intercessory Prayer Training lesson objectives

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Lesson One | 1. Learn the components of praying the model prayer as Jesus taught. 2. Understand the importance of why we prayer. 3. Unlock the power of prayer. 4. Experience practical application of praying God’s word. |
| Lesson Two | 1. Identify how the Holy Spirit helps us to pray. 2. Provide examples of what to pray for. 3. Learn how to pray the promises of God. 4. Experience practical application of how the Holy Spirit helps. |
| Lesson Three | 1. Learn how to pray in faith. |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| | 2. Understand what it means to pray in the name of Jesus. 3. Practice talking and listening to God. 4. Experience practical application of praying with faith and belief. |
| Lesson Four | 1. Know the difference between other types of prayer. 2. Learn how intercessory prayer builds intimacy with God. 3. Recognize the importance of intercessory prayer in ministry. 4. Experience practical application of interceding for others. |
| Lesson Five | 1. Understand that God does not always give us what we ask for. 2. Learn how to pray in faith and with authority. 3. Understand why sometimes God is quiet when we pray. 4. Experience practical application of praying with authority. |
| Lesson Six | 1. Learn why we must be watchful through prayer. 2. Understand that God has given us weapons against warfare. 3. Learn how the Holy Spirit empowers us for service. 4. Experience practical application of praying against spiritual warfare. |

Incorporated in the lesson plan were training videos from The Prayer Course used by permission by the 24-7 Prayer non-profit organization located in the United Kingdom.² There were six twenty-minute videos shown to support the lesson objectives as follows.

Table 5. Intercessory Prayer Training videos

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Lesson One | Training Video on “Why Pray?” | This video focused on the theology of prayer and participants learned that prayer is simply talking to God. |
| Lesson Two | Training Video on “Petition” | This video focused on how to approach God in prayer and articulate our needs back to God by making our requests known. |
| Lesson Three | Training Video on “Listening” | This video focused on how God speaks to us and how we can hear God. |
| Lesson Four | Training Video on “Intercession” | This video discussed in great detail the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer |
| Lesson Five | Training Video on “Unanswered Prayer” | This video addressed how to deal with disappointments when God does not answer our prayers. |
| Lesson Six | Training Video on “Spiritual Warfare” | This video discussed how to use our spiritual weapons of prayer to battle spiritual warfare. |

² 24-7 Prayer, “Info,” The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/info>.

The devotional homework assignments reinforced the learning objectives by incorporating devotional readings from *The Prayer of Jabez Devotional* book, journal reflections, scripture reading, and engaging in daily prayer. Fundamentally, devotional reading is a form of prayer to invite the reader to experience a spiritual journey as the text ministers to them. Participants also learned that devotional reading is a tool within the prayer toolbox that tends to “jumpstart” a desire to go deeper in reflective prayer. The table below delineates the six devotional homework assignments.

Table 6. Lesson 1-6 devotional homework assignments

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Lesson One | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prayer of Jabez Devotional</i>: Read Pages five through eight “Invitation: Preparing for the Jabez Miracle” 2. Journal Reflection: After the devotional reading, reflect and write what comes to mind as you read the daily devotions. 3. “Why Should We Pray:” Read Psalm 65:2 and Luke 11:13. Based on what you have learned this week and reflecting on these scriptures, what is God saying to you on why we need to pray? 4. Engage in prayer throughout the week and journal your experience. |
| Lesson Two | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prayer of Jabez Devotional</i>: Read Pages 12-32 “Oh Lord Bless Me Indeed” 2. Journal Reflection: After the devotional reading, reflect and write what comes to mind as you read the daily devotions. 3. “What Should We Pray For:” Read Ephesians 6:19-20 and Colossians 4:3. Based on what you have learned this week and reflecting on these scriptures, what is God saying to you about what to pray for regarding ministry leaders? 4. Engage in prayer throughout the week and journal your experience. |
| Lesson Three | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prayer of Jabez Devotional</i>: Read Pages 34-56 “Oh Lord Enlarge My Borders” 2. Journal Reflection: After the devotional reading, reflect and write what comes to mind as you read the daily devotions. 3. “How Should We Pray:” Read Deuteronomy 4:29 and Jeremiah 29:12-13. Based on what you have learned this week and reflecting on these scriptures, what is God saying to you about how we should pray and receive answers to prayer? 4. Engage in prayer throughout the week and journal your experience. |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Lesson Four | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prayer of Jabez Devotional</i>: Read Pages 58-83 “Oh Lord Put Your Hand Upon Me” 2. Journal Reflection: After the devotional reading, reflect and write what comes to mind as you read the daily devotions. 3. “When Should We Pray”: Read Luke 18:1, Ephesians 6:18, and 1 Thessalonians 5:17. Based on what you have learned this week and reflecting on these scriptures, what is God saying to you about when we should pray? 4. Engage in prayer throughout the week and journal your experience. |
| Lesson Five | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prayer of Jabez Devotional</i>: Read Pages 86-111 “Oh Lord Keep Me From Evil” 2. Journal Reflection: After the devotional reading, reflect and write what comes to mind as you read the daily devotions. 3. “What Hinders Prayer?”: Read Isaiah 59:1-2, James 4:3 and Mark 11:22-24. Based on what you have learned this week and reflecting on these scriptures, what is God saying to you about hindrances to prayer? 4. Engage in prayer throughout the week and journal your experience. |
| Lesson Six | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Prayer of Jabez Devotional</i>: Read Pages 114-125 “Epilogue “Celebrating the Jabez Miracle” 2. Journal Reflection: After the devotional reading, reflect and write what comes to mind as you read the daily devotions. 3. “Who Helps Us To Pray?” Read John 14:26 and Romans 8:26-27. Based on what you have learned this week and reflecting on these scriptures, what comes to mind with the affirmation that of who helps us to pray? 4. Engage in prayer throughout the week and journal your experience. |

After each training workshop, participants received a reminder to capture their experiences, reflections, and observations in the Research Project Prayer Journals. The following sections listing the six lessons provide specific details on the training highlights and the participants' engagement with the lessons, videos, and training materials.

Lesson One Workshop

Lesson one training workshop took place on July 22, 2021. There were three participants in the morning session and four participants in the evening session. This first lesson answered the question, why should we pray. Participants learned that Genesis 4:26 has the first recording of prayer, which notes that after the birth of Enosh, the people called on the name of the Lord. Participants also learned that there are variations and expressions of prayer, and that prayer unveils God's will. Establishing the theological foundation for why we should pray, participants learned that we need prayer for divine intervention, avoid temptation, receive the Holy Spirit, have the fullness of joy, receive empowerment for service and salvation.

The training video from *The Prayer Course*, "Why Pray," reinforced the training by engaging the participants visually in providing practical examples as to why people pray, followed by unpacking the petitions in the Model Prayer found in Luke 11:2-4 as a tool for teaching us to pray.³ In order to encourage participants to move beyond the difficulties of finding the words to pray and pray more, the video introduced the technique of "keeping it real, keeping it simple, and keeping it up" to encourage them to pray simple prayers. At the end of the video, participants shared their takeaways by responding to the following open discussion questions:

1. Do you find it difficult to pray? Why or why not?
2. Based on the video, do you feel you can use the technique of "keeping it real; keeping it simple, keeping it up will help improve your discipline to pray more often?

³ 24-7 Prayer, "Session 1: Why Pray," The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/why-pray/>.

Regarding the first question, participants from both sessions shared that they find it difficult to pray at times because of distractions, the inability to find a quiet place at home, and some indicated difficulty in knowing what to pray. Regarding the second question, all participants found the technique of keeping it real, keeping it simple, and keeping it up helpful. However, one participant indicated that the first two techniques were easy, but "keeping it up" was problematic. Overall, the participants' responses to the first training workshop collectively felt that the workshop hit the "reset" button for them to get back to the discipline of intercessory prayer.

Lesson Two Workshop

Lesson two training workshop took place on July 27, 2021. There were three participants in the morning session and three participants in the evening session. One participant required a makeup session as they could not meet during the scheduled times. This second lesson answered the question, "what should we pray?" A recap of lesson one training highlights preceded the introduction of lesson two, followed by a biblical example of prayer from the historical book of Ezra 8:21-23, where Ezra fasted and prayed for a safe journey. Participants learned that as we grow in a life of prayer, our prayer focus change from ourselves to the needs of others. They also learned that the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness in what to pray, and theologically helps us in various ways to fulfill the ministry of the gospel to those in need. Establishing the theological foundation for what we should pray, participants learned that we pray for ourselves, others, leadership, healing, and for empowerment to service.

The training video from The Prayer Course, “Petition,” emphasized the importance of being persistent, consistent, and to persevere in prayer even when it appears that God has not answered our prayers.⁴ Participants learned four practical steps on how to get through disappointments in prayer by praying with other people, pray incrementally, learn to pray God’s promises, and finally pray consistently. At the end of the video, participants shared their takeaways by responding to the following open discussion questions:

1. What do you find most helpful and challenging in this video? Why?
2. How often do you ask God for what you want and what you need? Reflect?

Participants shared expressions of encouragement to learn that they can be persistent in their prayers and precisely how to embrace God when it appears that God will not answer their prayers. Several participants gave testimonies on how God answered their prayers through persistent, fervent prayers, and others expressed that the video introduced new concepts that they will use, such as praying small prayers and how to allow God to embrace them when praying.

Lesson Three Workshop

Lesson three training workshop took place on July 29, 2021. There were three participants in the morning session and three participants in the evening session. One participant required a makeup session as they could not meet during the scheduled times. This third lesson answered the question, “how should we pray?” A recap of lesson two training highlights preceded the introduction of lesson three, followed by a biblical

⁴ 24-7 Prayer, “Session 3: Petition,” The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/petition/>.

example of prayer from the historical book of Exodus 33:11, where God spoke to Moses face-to-face. Participants learned that the analogy of speaking face-to-face with God means there was a familiarity, a relationship, bonding establishing a frequent communication with God. Lesson three also addressed that intercessory prayer is a method of releasing God's love to others through the works of the Holy Spirit. Participants learned that prayer is a form of spiritual communication, and that God speaks to us in many ways. The training included practical examples of how God speaks. Thereby, establishing the theological foundation on how to pray, participants learned how to pray in the name of Jesus, pray the will of God by listening to God, pray with proper motivation, and pray in the Spirit.

The training video from The Prayer Course, "Listening," addressed some key points that God does speak to us today and that God expects us to walk and talk with him.⁵ However, to hear God we need to slow down and soften up our hearts to be receptive of what God is saying. The video also touched on how to discern the voice of God by ensuring that what someone says to us or what we think we hear lines up with God's word. Participants learned that sometimes God answers prayers immediately, sometimes we must wait, and sometimes God does not answer our prayers. Therefore, we can pray incrementally but keep praying until God gives an answer. The video concluded with demonstrating how to listen to God through the practice of *Lectio Divina*, which is a technique of reading the scripture several times to explore what stands out or speak to you spiritually. At the end of the video, participants shared their takeaways by responding to the following open discussion questions:

⁵ 24-7 Prayer, "Session 7: Listening," The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/listening/>.

1. What do you find most helpful and challenging in this video? Why?
2. Do you recognize God's voice when He's speaking to you? Reflect?

Participants shared personal experiences where they experienced the voice of God in various ways helping them through difficult times, guiding them to receive blessings, launching of ministries, and helping someone in need. Their testimonies confirmed that many of the participants are actively engaged in prayer, but they did not know the theological foundation of intercessory prayer as a spiritual discipline. Participants are beginning to show signs of spiritual growth toward the discipline of intercessory prayer.

Lesson Four Workshop

Lesson four training workshop took place on August 3, 2021. There were three participants in the morning session and four participants in the evening session. This fourth lesson answered the question, "When should we pray?" A recap of lesson three training highlights preceded the introduction of lesson four, followed by a biblical example of prayer from the historical book of Isaiah 59:16, where God looked for someone to intercede on behalf of a corrupt society and could not find anyone. Participants learned the characteristics of intercessory prayer compared to other categories of prayer. Lesson four also introduced additional characteristics that the office of an intercessor comes with great responsibility to execute God's will on behalf of the people, church, country, and nation. Participants learned that intercessory prayer facilitates divine connectedness with God on behalf of others. Lesson four also introduced the theological foundation of biblical examples of what it means to stand in the gap for a nation through intercessory prayer.

The training video from The Prayer Course, “Intercession,” introduced the definition of intercessory prayer as being prayers on behalf of others comparatively with that of petitionary-type prayers asking God for something.⁶ The video introduced vivid examples of biblical intercessors and contemporary examples where intercession changed the course of a potential disaster. The video also introduced the four steps to intercession: get informed, get inspired, get indignant, and get in sync. These are the four steps to intercession in which participants practiced weekly during their prayer sessions devotionally and corporately during prayer meetings. At the end of the video, participants shared their takeaways by responding to the following open discussion questions:

1. Based on the video, what is your feeling now about intercessory prayer? Is this something that can help you in your ministry?
2. Have you ever had a feeling that you needed to pray for something or someone? What happened?

All participants expressed that they learned so much from the video and the training in general. Notably, they expressed that this video unveiled new insights in areas that they had not explored before. Some participants expressed feelings of remorse as they felt that they could and should do more in prayer. Additionally, one participant expressed that even though she considered herself experienced in the practice of intercessory, she felt blessed to learn so much more that further empowered her to engage in persistent prayer. Some participants shared testimonies of how God used them to pray for strangers, some shared receiving divine connections where God used them in mighty ways. Many expressed that they did not understand that their experiences were part of a spiritual

⁶ 24-7 Prayer, “Session 4: Intercession,” The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/intercession/>.

discipline of intercessory prayer, and this video provided new insights into the practice of seeking the will of God through prayer.

Lesson Five Workshop

Lesson five training workshop took place on August 5, 2021. There were four participants in the morning session and three participants in the evening session. This fifth lesson answered the question, “What hinders prayer?” A recap of lesson four training highlights preceded the introduction of lesson five, followed by a biblical example of hindrances to prayers from the historical book of Jeremiah 11:11, where God used Jeremiah to speak to the people regarding their wickedness; and because of their sin, God would not hear their cries. Participants learned the characteristics of intercessory prayer compared to other categories of prayer. Lesson five also introduced how prayer builds faith and establishes authority through praying the promises of God, and they learned how to take authority in prayer as directed by the Holy Spirit. Participants also received an overview of the theological examples of what hinders prayer. Lesson five introduced the theological foundation of biblical examples of why sometimes we experience unanswered prayers or silence from God. Participants learned that even though God does not answer our prayers, we can still trust God.

The training video from The Prayer Course, “Unanswered Prayers,” introduced some vivid examples of how unanswered prayers can leave one feeling abandoned by God.⁷ However, the video provided encouraging advice that we can trust God even though we do not understand God’s reasoning. The video shared examples of Jesus’

⁷ 24-7 Prayer, “Session 5: Unanswered Prayer,” The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/unanswered-prayer/>

unanswered prayers taken from Mark 14:32-32 where Jesus experienced unanswered prayers submitting to the will of God, even though he did not want to die. At the end of the video, participants shared their takeaways by responding to the following open discussion questions:

1. What do you find most helpful and challenging in this video? Why?
2. How has the reality of unanswered prayer impacted your willingness to continue in prayer? Reflect?

This video had an emotional impact on many of the participants as many reflected on how they felt when God did not answer their prayers, leaving them feeling abandoned and disappointed. Several participants shared stories of losing both parents after earnestly praying for God to heal them. Another could not share as she was still processing the emotional trauma, she experienced many years prior. However, she found comfort in knowing that God was right there by her side through it all and is still there comforting her. The takeaway from this lesson was that all participants embrace the parachute analogy where God will come down from heaven to comfort in times of need.

Lesson Six Workshop

Lesson six training workshop took place on August 10, 2021. There were three participants in the morning session and four participants in the evening session. This sixth lesson answered the question, “Who helps us in prayer?” A recap of lesson five training highlights preceded the introduction of lesson six, followed by a biblical example of spiritual warfare from the historical book of Daniel 10:12, where God sent the angel to assure Daniel that God heard his prayers. Participants learned why we must be watchful

in prayer, persevere through difficult times, and learn to use the spiritual weapons of prayer against warfare.

Lesson six also introduced how prayer empowers us for service through a spiritual union by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Participants learned what it means to be watchful through prayer as without prayer, the depletion of our confidence and strength would resolve to weakness and ultimately defeat. Participants also received an overview of theological examples of how the Holy Spirit empowered believers for service. Lesson six provided additional theological examples of how the infilling of the Holy Spirit produces spiritual transformation in believers empowering them to service.

The training video from The Prayer Course, “Spiritual Warfare,” introduced the importance of believers being watchful against the enemies who are lurking to destroy the works of God.⁸ The video provided vivid examples that we live in a time of spiritual warfare and prayer helps invoke the Holy Spirit to always come to our rescue. The video also details the spiritual armor taken from Ephesians 6:11-14 to help defend ourselves. At the end of the video, participants shared their takeaways by responding to the following open discussion questions:

1. What do you find most helpful and challenging in this video? Why?
2. Provide some examples of how you were spiritually attacked and did prayer help you through the spiritual conflict? Reflect?

The participants shared their experience with the video as well as takeaways. Some shared that the video put perspective around what they had been experiencing over the past few weeks and the timing of the video will help them to navigate in prayer against

⁸ 24-7 Prayer, “Session 8: Spiritual Warfare,” The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/spiritual-warfare>.

warfare. Another shared a takeaway regarding how to pray in the victory of God by praying it, practicing it, and preaching it. The intercessory prayer training concluded at the end of lesson six where the participants shared their final remarks in how the training and participation in the prayer group meetings changed their feelings about prayer and now felt empowered to continue. They expressed hope that the context would launch a prayer ministry and continue with training others who would like to be a part of the prayer ministry.

Make-up Sessions

Two participants required make-up sessions. One for lesson two another for lesson three. Lesson three make-up session took place on July 30, 2021, at 6:00 a.m. for one participant, and lesson two make-up session took place on August 1, 2021, at 1:15 p.m. for the other participant.

Intercessory Prayer Focus Group Meetings

The intercessory prayer focus group meetings began on Saturday, July 24, 2021, and continued every Saturday for three weeks from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary at the context location, Canaan Baptist Church, and the final meeting took place on August 7, 2021. The meeting agenda each week included the welcome by the prayer group leader, scripture reading of Romans 8:37-39, worship, opening prayer by a participant, and focused group intercession. The practical application of intercessory prayer for the prayer group meetings used the techniques introduced in the Intercessory Prayer Training Workshops and the appendices of the Intercessory Prayer Training

Manual offered additional resources on how to become informed and prepare for the prayer group meetings.

The video from The Prayer Course introduced the four practical steps to intercession, which became the method used to prepare for each prayer group meeting.⁹ Using the four practical steps to intercession engaged participants in practicing how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-filled, and faith-driven prayers as follows.

Table 7. Four practical steps to intercession

| |
|--|
| 1. Get Informed: This is targeting prayers by gathering data and getting facts about who, where, and what you are praying for such as news, prayer requests, area maps. Refer to Appendix 8 for area maps of Delaware. |
| 2. Get Inspired: Seek the will of God for targeting your prayers by inviting the Holy Spirit to assist you in interceding. Refer to Appendix 6 for inspiration on God's promises. |
| 3. Get Indignant: Take authority over the situation. Refer to Appendix 5 as a resource to pray God's word. |
| 4. Get In Synch: Pray in agreement with one another. You do this by joining together with one or more in a group and vocally agreeing how to pray. |

To assist participants in understanding how to use the four practical steps to intercession, the Intercessory Prayer Training Manual provided guidance on how to apply the techniques for each prayer meeting. The reduction of the training plan from six weeks to three weeks resulted in merging the weekly prayer focus as follows.

Table 8: Weekly prayer focus

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Week One Prayer Focus | Intercession for the Church and Community Intercession for Leadership and Ministries |
| Week Two Prayer Focus | Intercession for the Needs of the Congregation Intercession for Divine Insight |
| Week Three Prayer Focus | Intercession Against Hindrances Intercession for Revival |

⁹ 24-7 Prayer, "Session 4: Intercession," The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/intercession/>.

The next sections will provide the specific details of the weekly prayer group meetings with specific highlights from the group intercession.

Week One Prayer Group Meeting

The first prayer group meeting took place on Saturday, July 24, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. Five of the seven confirmed participants attended the first prayer group meeting. While gathered in the sanctuary, the prayer group leader opened the meeting by welcoming the participants, assigned scripture reading and opening prayer to one of the participants, introduced the worship song, confirmed the group prayer focus as the church, community, Canaan's leadership, and Canaan's ministries. The group intercessory prayer time was twenty minutes, which was fifteen minutes before the top of the hour.

After the opening prayer, the participants assembled around the sanctuary into three groups of two and engaged in focused intercession and came back together at the designated time to share their experiences with group intercession. Even though three separate groups were praying, the prayers of intercession were on one accord as the Holy Spirit joined the groups, and the prayers became Spirit-led prayers. The prayer group ended at the top of the hour with a closing prayer by a participant.

Week Two Prayer Group Meeting

The second prayer group meeting took place on Saturday, July 31, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. Three of the seven confirmed participants attended this prayer group meeting. One participant brought her eleven-year-old daughter to wait quietly, but her daughter wanted to join the prayer meeting, and volunteered to lead the opening prayer. While gathered in

the Hall of Faith, the prayer group leader opened the meeting by welcoming the participants, assigned scripture reading and opening prayer to one of the participants, introduced the worship song, confirmed the prayer focus as the congregational needs of Canaan and divine insight. The group intercessory prayer time was twenty minutes, which was fifteen minutes before the top of the hour.

After the opening prayer, the participants assembled into one small group of three, engaged in focused intercession, and ended at the designated time to reflect on what God was saying as a result of their prayers. The collective responses were that they believed that God wanted the group to pray for our missionaries. Consequently, the group gathered around the leader of the missionary's ministry praying for divine insight, covering her in prayer as the Holy Spirit led. The next day, the participants experienced divine confirmation as the pastor preached the exact things, they prayed the day before. All the participants expressed great empowerment to see how the Holy Spirit worked through them on behalf of the missionaries as result of their prayers. The prayer group ended at the top of the hour with a closing prayer by a participant.

Week Three Prayer Group Meeting

The final prayer group meeting took place on Saturday, August 7, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. There were seven confirmed participants in attendance of this final prayer meeting. While gathered in the sanctuary, the prayer group leader opened the meeting by welcoming the participants, assigned scripture reading and opening prayer to one of the participants, introduced the worship song, confirmed the prayer focus to pray against hindrances and to pray for revival in the community of New Castle, Delaware. The group

intercessory prayer time was twenty minutes, which was fifteen minutes before the top of the hour.

After the conclusion of the opening prayer, the participants assembled into groups with one group of three, one group of four and engaged in focused intercession against hindrances and revival following the four practical steps to intercession and ended at the designated time to reflect on what God was saying as a result of their prayers. Each participant had an opportunity to share their experiences, and many reflected on praying against strongholds in our communities, family, and leaders. Many expressed even though this was our last meeting with regards to this research project, the prayer group meeting must continue for the move of the Spirit of God to take Canaan to another level. One participant expressed that she had been praying for God to get a prayer group started at Canaan and felt that intercessory prayer was a ministry she wanted to serve. The prayer group ended at the top of the hour with a closing prayer by a participant.

Project Wrap Up and Conclusion

The training schedule incorporated a day for the project wrap-up and conclusion to ensure the participants had time to complete their final reflections, remarks, and observations from lesson six. To avoid U.S. mail delays previously incurred during the pre-training period, a physical pick-up at the context location took place on August 12, 2021. The participants completed their Post-Training Surveys (Appendix F), Final Evaluation Form (Appendix I), Research Prayer Journals and dropped them off in a sealed envelope. Many participants expressed they would like to receive their prayer journals back and supplied an address for mailing them back. All participants received a

small gift thanking them for sacrificing their time and commitment to completing the training. Their input was instrumental in providing the data to affirm the hypothesis that if ministry leaders learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, they will become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to serve. The following section on the Summary of Learnings will provide the data to support how well the intercessory training model affirmed the hypothesis.

Summary of Learnings

The overall objective of this intercessory prayer model aimed to empower ministry leaders for service to enhance the participant's attitude toward prayer, affirm the importance of prayer in the church, and stimulate a desire for participants to grow in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. This section reveals the results of the data to examine the sociodemographic variables to provide background information on participants factored onto examining how the empirical data from the pre- and post-training surveys, prayer journal reflections, testimonies, and final evaluations measured the effectiveness of this intercessory prayer model on the participant's attitudes toward the spiritual discipline of prayer.

Demographics Survey Results

The demographics survey provided background characteristics on the participants such as gender, race, age, education, employment status, and years living in or near New Castle, Delaware. Also, the demographics survey gathered data on participants' years

serving at Canaan Baptist Church, Delaware, their travel distance to the church, and the ministry they represent.

Regarding demographics on gender and race, out of the ten ministries solicited for volunteers, 100 percent of the confirmed seven participants were Black females. Figure 1 shows that 57% (four) of participants are in the age range of forty to fifty-four and 43% (three) are in the age range of fifty-five and above.

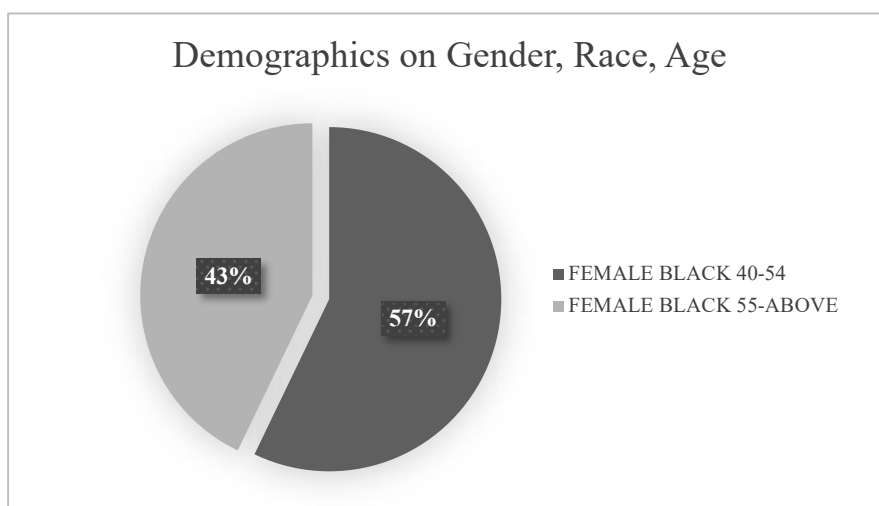


Figure 1: Demographics on gender, race, and age

Regarding demographics on education, Figure 2 shows that 43% (three) of participants have college degrees, 29% (two) have post-graduate, 14% (one) have high school diploma, and 14% (one) have a vocational degree employed full time.

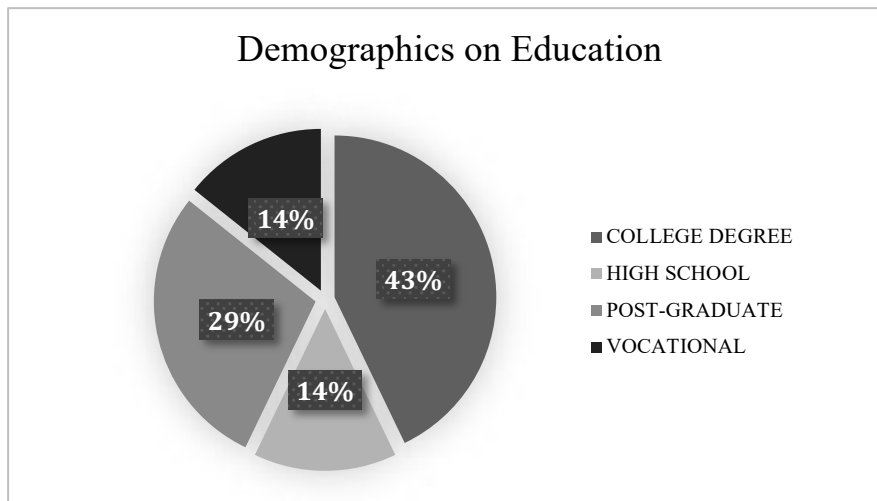


Figure 2. Demographics on education

Regarding demographics on employment status, Figure 3 shows that 71% (five) of participants are employed full time and 29% (two) are retired.

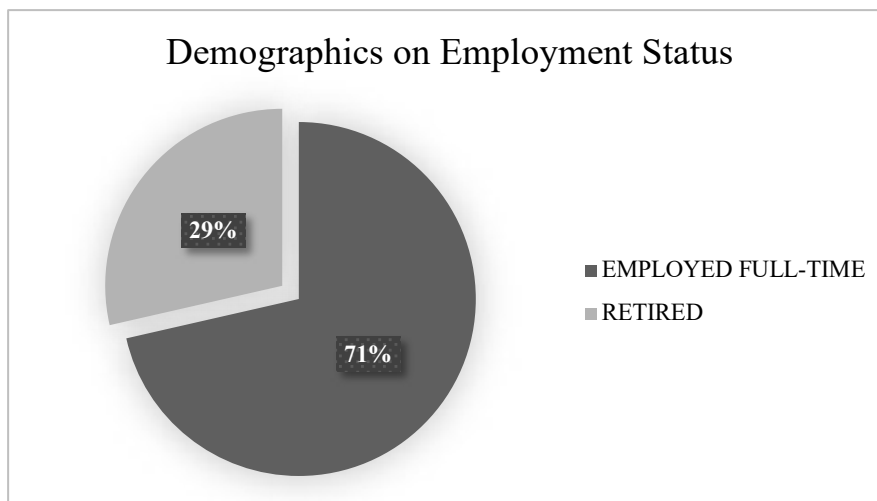


Figure 3. Demographics on employment status

Regarding demographics on years living in or near New Castle, Delaware, Figure 3 shows 43% (three) lived in the area for twenty or more years, 43% (three) lived in the area for ten to twenty years, and 14% (one) lived in the area for five to ten years.

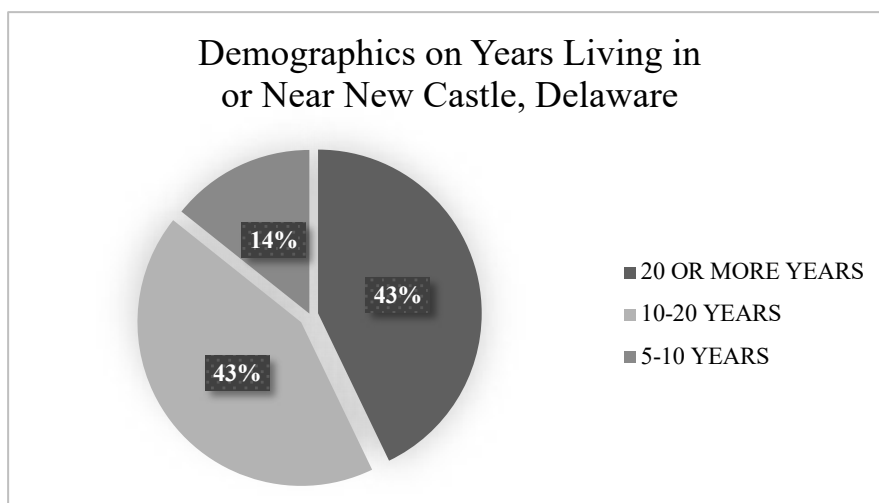


Figure 4. Demographics on years living in New Castle, Delaware

Regarding demographics on years serving in ministry at Canaan Baptist Church, Figure 5 shows 43% (three) of participants have served at Canaan for eleven or more years, 43% (three) for five to ten years, and 14% (one) for two to four years.

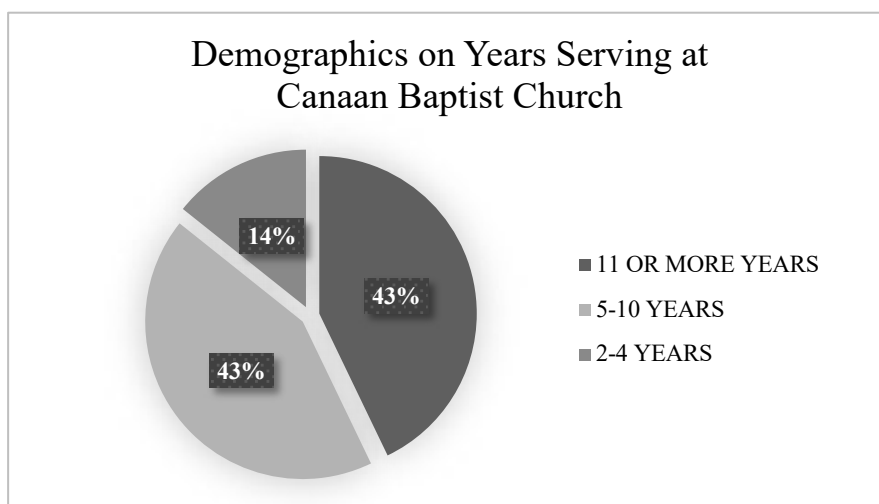


Figure 5. Demographics on years attending Canaan

Regarding demographics on travel distance to Canaan Baptist Church, Figure 6 shows 43% (three) of participants live within five minutes of Canaan, 29% (two) live less than ten minutes, 14% (one) live less than fifteen minutes, and 14% (one) live a distance from the church.

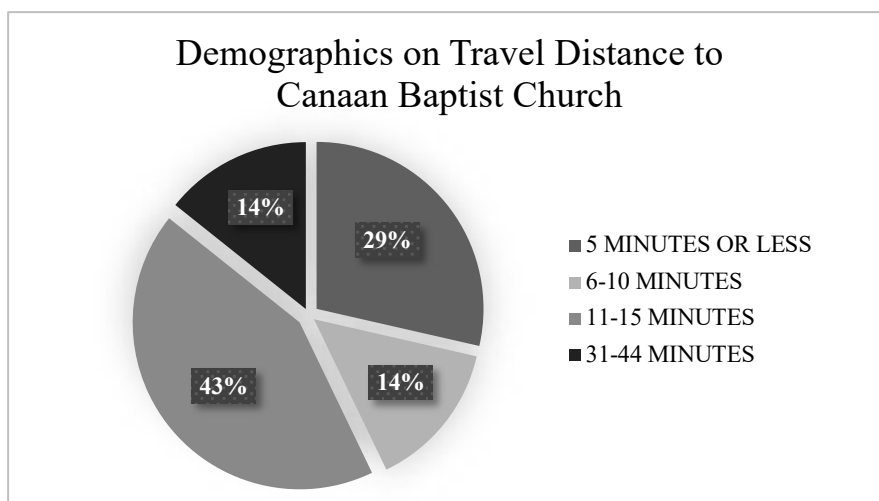


Figure 6. Demographics on travel distance to Canaan

Regarding demographics on the ministries represented as part of this research project, several participants serve in multiple ministries, which includes the following ministries: Women's Ministry (four), Scholarship Committee (two), Evangelism (two), Ministerial Staff (one), Deacons Ministry (one), Christian Education Ministry (one), Missionary Ministry (one), Drama Ministry (one), Marriage Ministry (one), Music Ministry (one), and Other (two).

Pre- and Post-Training Surveys Results

The empirical data from pre-training survey 1.0 measured participants' attitudes toward intercessory prayer, and pre-training survey 2.0 measured participants' spiritual discipline of engaging in intercessory prayer. Thereby establishing the baseline for measuring the pre-training data against the post-training data to assess the effectiveness of the intercessory prayer training model to affirm the hypothesis that if ministry leaders learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, then they will become more confident, spiritually strengthen, and empowered to serve.

Regarding participants' attitudes toward intercessory prayer, it was not surprising in the pre-training survey 1.0 summary resulted in 70% of the seven participants agreed and strongly agreed that they understood the importance and effectiveness of intercessory prayer on their lives and their ministries as many indicated their desire to improve in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. The remaining 30%, leaned more in the neutral area, understood the importance of intercessory prayer but were less confident in their attitude toward the effectiveness of intercessory prayer for ministry. Following Figure 7 are details of their responses in the pre-training survey 1.0.

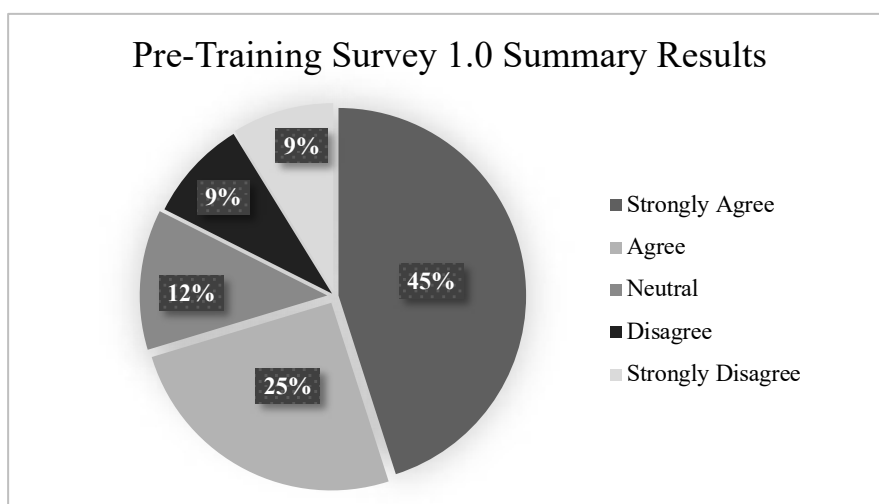


Figure 7. Pre-training survey 1.0 summary results

Table 9. Pre-training survey results 1.0

| Pre-Training Survey 1.0 Results | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| How much do you agree? With regards to intercessory prayer ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
| 1. I have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayer. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 57% | 20% |
| 2. I believe that the ministry of intercessory prayer is important for my church, | 0% | 0% | 0% | 29% | 71% |

| Pre-Training Survey 1.0 Results | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| How much do you agree? With regards to intercessory prayer ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
| community and for my spiritual growth in ministry. | | | | | |
| 3. I believe that intercessory prayer helps to reveal the will of God for my life and ministry. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 57% | 43% |
| 4. When I am faced with ministry challenges, I immediately engage into prayer for God to intervene. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 43% | 43% |
| 5. I find a quiet place and time to pray daily for at least 30 minutes or more. | 0% | 14% | 29% | 42% | 14% |
| 6. I feel closest to God when I pray. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 14% | 71% |
| 7. I prefer to spend quiet time alone in prayer rather than praying within a group of people. | 0% | 14% | 43% | 29% | 14% |
| 8. Intercessory prayer enables me to lead with confidence through empowerment by the Holy Spirit. | 0% | 14% | 0% | 14% | 71% |
| 9. I often experience a burden to pray for others, my church, and my community. | 14% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 57% |
| 10. I keep a prayer journal where I can see how God responds to my prayers. | 0% | 29% | 29% | 29% | 14% |
| 11. I feel healthier spiritually and more prepared to serve and lead in ministry when I pray. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 14% | 71% |
| 12. I often experience answers to prayers. | 0% | 14% | 0% | 0% | 86% |

Regarding the spiritual discipline of participants engaged in intercessory prayer, the pre-training survey 2.0 summary results showed 88% of the seven participants agreed and strongly agreed that they engage in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer building their strength and confidence in ministry. Although the remaining 12% were not

satisfied with or confident in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer, they were very confident in their overall relationship with God through prayer. Following Figure 8 are details of participants responses in the pre-training survey 2.0.

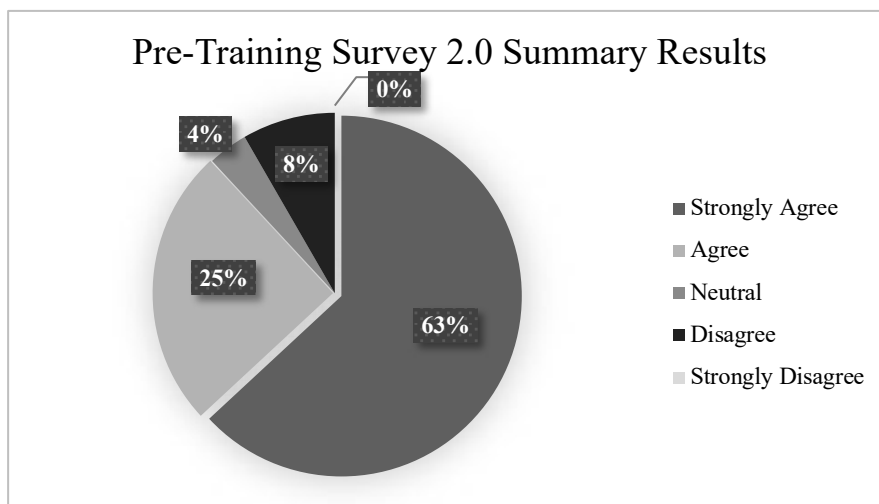


Figure 8. Pre-training survey 2.0 summary results

Table 10. Pre-training survey results 2.0

| Pre-Training Survey Results 2.0 | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| How much do you agree...? When I pray ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
| 1. I am very satisfied with my personal prayer life. | 0% | 43% | 14% | 43% | 0% |
| 2. I feel at peace in my overall relationship with God. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 71% | 29% |
| 3. I feel more confident in talking to others about God. | 0% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 71% |
| 4. I have courage to face the responsibilities of leading in ministry. | 0% | 14% | 0% | 14% | 71% |
| 5. I sense God's love deeply for me. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 6. I believe that I have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 29% | 57% |

| | | | | | |
|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 7. I feel my spiritual strength has increased. | 0% | 14% | 0% | 0% | 86% |
| 8. I have a deepening desire to spend more time with God | 0% | 0% | 14% | 0% | 86% |
| 9. I have an intensified desire to do God's will. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 29% | 71% |
| 10. I believe that God speaks to me as I pray. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 29% | 71% |
| 11. I get helpful insights, visions, and revelation when I pray. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 29% | 71% |
| 12. I feel more empowered to overcome temptations in my life when I pray. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 43% | 57% |

Regarding the post-training survey results measuring participants' attitudes toward intercessory prayer, the post-training survey 1.0 summary results now show 91%, a 21% increase of the seven participants agreed and strongly agreed that they understood the importance and effectiveness of intercessory prayer. The remaining 8%, a decrease of 4% of participants, remained neutral, and 1% disagreed, a decrease of 17%. Following Figure 9 are details of participants' responses to post-training survey 1.0.

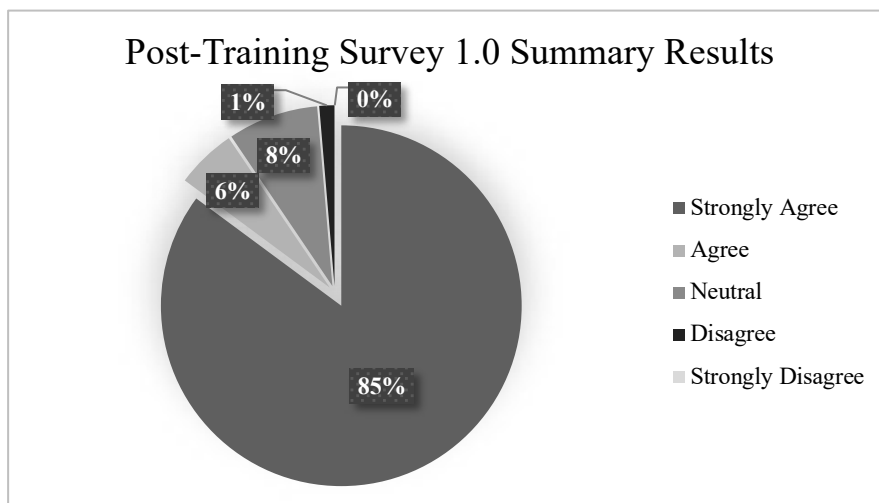


Figure 9. Post-training survey 1.0 summary results

Table 11. Post-training survey 1.0 results

| Post-Training Survey Results 1.0 | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| How much do you agree? With regards to my understanding of intercessory prayer ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
| 1. I now have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayer. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14 % | 86% |
| 2. I now believe that the ministry of intercessory prayer is important for my church, community and for my spiritual growth in ministry. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 3. I now believe that intercessory prayer helps to reveal the will of God for my life and ministry. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| 4. Now, when I am faced with ministry challenges, I immediately engage into prayer for God's to intervene. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 5. I now find a quiet place and time to pray daily for at least 30 minutes or more. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 57% | 29% |
| 6. I now feel closer to God when I pray. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 7. I now feel comfortable in praying within a group of people rather than alone. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 14% | 71% |
| 8. Because of intercessory prayer, I now lead with confidence through the empowerment by the Holy Spirit. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 14% | 71% |
| 9. I now experience a burden to pray for others, my church, and my community. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 14% | 71% |
| 10. I now keep a prayer journal where I can see how God responds to my prayers. | 0% | 14% | 0% | 29% | 57% |
| 11. I now feel healthier spiritually and more prepared to serve and lead in ministry. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 0% | 87% |
| 12. I now experience answers to prayers. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 14% | 71% |

Regarding the spiritual discipline of participants engaged in intercessory prayer, the post-training survey 2.0 summary results showed 94%, a 6% increase of the seven participants agreed and strongly agreed that they now engage in intercessory prayer. Out of the remaining 6%, 5%, a 1% increase, remained in the neutral, with 1%, a decrease by 7% were not satisfied with their spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. However, overall, the participants felt more confident in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer and their relationship with God. Following Figure 10 are details of participants' responses to post-training survey 2.0.

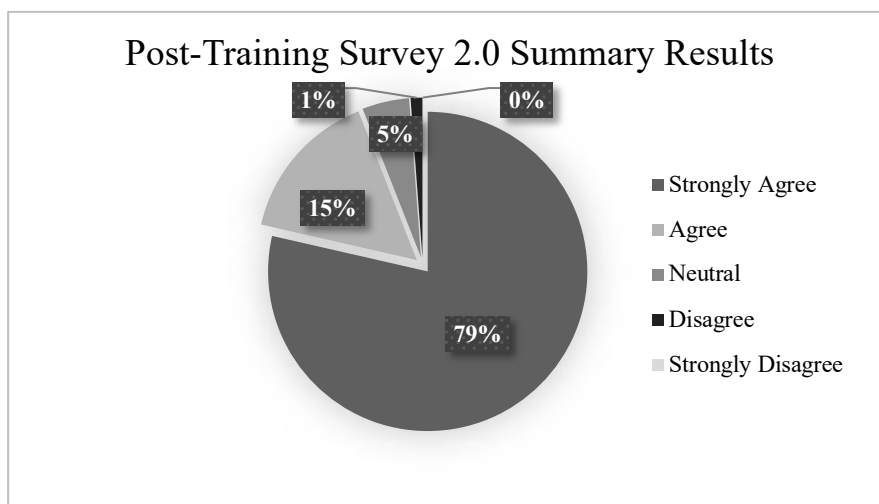


Figure 10. Post-training survey 2.0 summary results

Table 12. Post-training survey 2.0 results

| Post-Training Survey Results 2.0 | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| How much do you agree...? Now when I pray ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
| 1. I am now very satisfied with my personal prayer life. | 0% | 14% | 0% | 71% | 14% |
| 2. I now feel at peace in my overall relationship with God. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |

| | | | | | |
|--|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 3. I now feel more confident in talking to others about God. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 0% | 86% |
| 4. I now have courage to face the responsibilities of leading in ministry. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 0% | 86% |
| 5. I now sense God's love deeply for me. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 6. I now believe that I have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 7. I now feel my spiritual strength has increased. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 8. I now have a deepening desire to spend more time with God | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 9. I now have an intensified desire to do God's will. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |
| 10. I now believe that God speaks to me as I pray. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 0% | 86% |
| 11. I now get helpful insights, visions, and revelation when I pray. | 0% | 0% | 14% | 14% | 71% |
| 12. I now feel more empowered to overcome temptations in my life. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% |

Prayer Journal Reflections

The research prayer journals provided participants' reflections and observations on the training, videos, devotional assignments, weekly prayer focus, and group prayer meetings. Although not all participants consistently journaled their reflections, their entries indicated that the intercessory prayer model influenced their desires to move beyond their current prayer routines into more intimate communication with God for ministry. The following journal highlights reflect some of their experiences with the intercessory prayer model:

“I love the quote by Hudson Taylor on the devotional, ‘God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.’ This resonated with me because God will provide the power through the Holy Spirit to enable me to do what he has called me to do. Whether or not I think I can. Just be willing to step out of my comfort zone, have faith and the rest is up to God.” [Participant: C7F4FA78]

“Because I did not know specifically what to pray for, I asked the Holy Spirit to reveal the general needs, and He did that.” [Participant: E6B28D14]

“We work in union with God’s will although he could do it alone. Allow the things that breaks God’s heart break my heart too.” [Participant: ED3543BC]

“After praying for the church, my focus later turned to families, especially young families, young adults; we need to be receptive to their needs, which are different than in previous years. Pray that we welcome families and ask God to show us how to represent His love to grow the church, thus teaching younger generations of the things of God.” [Participant: 5E83483C]

“When praying for others, always let the Holy Spirit lead you. The Lord has given us His promises. Give them back to Him and stand on them.” [506C4796]

“All Christians are called to share in the ministry of Christ’s intercession for the whole world.” [Participant: A485D633]

Final Evaluations

In the final evaluation, participants responded to six questions to capture their written responses on how the intercessory prayer model impacted their leadership in ministry and influenced their spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. All seven

participants completed and submitted the final evaluation. The summary of their responses are as follows:

Question 1: Do you feel you have become more acquainted with God? In what way(s)? All participants indicated they felt more prepared, spiritually equipped to pray for others, and felt they have become more acquainted with God through prayer.

Question 2: What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the intercessory prayer group on the ministry you lead and/or serve at Canaan Baptist Church? For example, the Evangelism Ministry, Christian Education Ministry, Health ministry, the Usher Ministry, etc. Although there were only four weeks to participate in this training without much interaction with leading in ministry due to Covid-19, many participants indicated they are more confident based on their learning experience the ministries of Canaan should thrive from intercessory prayer.

Question 3: In what ways do you think this intercessory prayer training has either strengthened or empowered you in the ministries you lead? All participants expressed they received new insights on what it means to pray for others, their relationship with God improved, and they now look for opportunities for God to use them. Many overwhelmingly felt the training strengthened and empowered them.

Question 4: What do you think are the major strengths and/or weaknesses of this intercessory prayer model? Many participants expressed the strengths in the intercessory prayer model was learning how to connect to God, the practical steps to prayer were very useful, and some felt the training was compacted, but they received what was needed.

Question 5: Do you think having an intercessory prayer ministry at Canaan Baptist Church is vital to enhance the spiritual climate of the church? The overwhelming

response to this question is yes, very much. Some indicated that they had been praying for Canaan to start a prayer ministry.

Question 6: Would you like to continue being a part of a prayer ministry at Canaan Baptist Church? Explain your answer or concerns. Again, the overwhelming response to this question was yes! They would participate in a prayer ministry at Canaan. However, one indicated that they were not able to participate at this time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Ministry Focus chapter of this project identified within Canaan Baptist Church, New Castle, Delaware, that there is a need for leadership empowerment to help ministry leaders move beyond self-sufficiency and tap into the divine source that will enable them to remain steadfast in fulfilling the mission of the church as ordained by God. As a result, this Doctor of Ministry project entitled “The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service” sought to address this need in support of the hypothesis that if ministry leaders learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, then they will become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to lead in ministry.

Therefore, the research approach included examination of the biblical foundation that focused on empowerment by the Holy Spirit to witness resulting from prayer as depicted in Acts 4:23-31. It also included examination of Matthew 21:12-13 as foundational to the temple being a house of prayer. An examination of the historical figure, Charles Finney, revealed the effectiveness of intercessory prayer through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to evangelize and transform communities.

Foundationally, to support the theme of leadership empowerment through intercessory prayer, the implementation of the intercessory prayer model included setting aside regular prayer times, inviting the Holy Spirit to help in targeting prayers using prayer techniques and resources to prepare daily for the practical application of intercessory prayer. Additionally, the intercessory prayer model incorporated weekly prayer meetings in the sanctuary at the Canaan Baptist Church to engage in group prayer allowing the Holy Spirit to lead the prayers to reveal the will of God to the group.

The research approach also examined the Practical Theology of prayer from the perspective of the empirical component of Practical Theology, which focused more on how the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer facilitates the infilling of the Holy Spirit for purposes of ministry. Fundamentally, the science of communication as it relates to intercessory prayer integrates with the empirical component of Practical Theology in that the practice of intercessory prayer is simply spiritual communication with God. Taking into consideration the interrelationship between the theology of prayer and the science of prayer, the implementation of the intercessory prayer model introduced the theology of intercessory prayer by providing practical biblical examples of spiritual communication in seeking the will of God, and God assisting to carry out the His will for ministry.

The results of the qualitative analytical research revealed that the participants experienced an increase in their desire to engage in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer. The empirical data revealed that the participants' communication with God improved, and many expressed after prayer, they felt more confident, strengthened, and empowered to lead and serve. The final evaluations noted the participants' overwhelming

desire to continually grow in the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer, and many expressed that they would like to be a part of a prayer ministry at Canaan Baptist Church. Overall, the research results from the implementation of the intercessory prayer model affirmed the importance of the spiritual discipline of intercessory prayer as a primary tool to empower ministry leaders for service.

APPENDIX A
CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS FLYER

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

(Must be 18 Years or Older to Participate)

Canaan Baptist Church



An Intercessory Prayer Research Model for Ministry Leaders

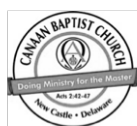
Researcher: Rev. Anita Michelle Coleman
May 2021

Leadership Empowerment Training Through the Ministry of Intercessory Prayer

If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (2 Chron. 7:14)

Objective:

- Participants will learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers,
- Participants will build their confidence in serving,
- Participants will feel spiritually strengthened,
- Participants will be empowered to lead in ministry.



Rev. Dr. Christopher Alan Bullock, Pastor
3011 New Castle Avenue
New Castle, Delaware 19720
Ph: 302- 654-8818

For more information, contact:
Rev. Anita M. Coleman
PH: 484-433-0437
amcoleman1@united.edu

APPENDIX B

WELCOME LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear Volunteers:

Praise God!! I have now reached the required number of volunteers.

First and foremost, thank you for being a blessing by volunteering to help me complete the final stages of my research at United Theological Seminary. The title of my research project is, "The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service." The context for this research is Canaan Baptist Church under the approval of Rev. Dr. Christopher A. Bullock, Pastor.

Prior to participating in the project, I must secure your signed commitment in this human subject research – even if it is just prayer training and participation in a prayer group. This is a requirement of the seminary to ensure research methods are in compliance with the IRB (Institutional Review Board) involving human subjects. I have attached a commitment form for you to initial each paragraph and sign at the end. After receiving your commitment and willingness to participate, you are officially enrolled to participate and you will receive a Project Resource Packet that will include all your training materials, forms, and supporting documentation. I will have printed copies of this commitment form available on Sunday as well.

Secondly, I would like to respect your time commitments and disclose to you as much information as possible for planning and coordination of schedules. The attached document will provide the project overview and the proposed schedule. I am flexible to change so that we can get everyone together as much as possible. If the majority prefers evenings, we will do evenings for the workshops. Some individuals may not be ready for in-person gatherings to join the group at the church for prayer. Therefore, those who cannot join the group at the church on Saturday mornings, can join in prayer virtually.

Thank you again and see you on Sunday. If you have any questions, please call me at 484-433-0437 or you can of course send me an email.

Blessings,
Rev. Anita

Attachments:

Human Subject Informed Consent Form
Project Training Schedule and Agenda

APPENDIX C
HUMAN SUBJECT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

HUMAN SUBJECT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I am conducting a research study as part of my dissertation project in partial fulfillment of my Doctor of Ministry Degree at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.

Research Title: The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service

Project Director: Reverend Anita Michelle Coleman

Purpose of Study:

This is a consent form for participants 18 years or older. You have an option to take part in a research study on the efficacy of intercessory prayer for empowering leaders in ministry. The goals of this form are to give you information about the study if you choose to take part and to help you decide if you want to be in the study.

Name of participant:

Please print first & last name

Please read and initial each section below.

(Your initials indicate you have read and understand each section.)

The Research Project

_____ This project addresses a training model for intercessory prayer that empowers ministry leaders for service at Canaan Baptist Church of Delaware as the context. The research question attempts to affirm that: if ministry leaders will learn how to pray Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers, will they become more confident, spiritually strengthened, and empowered to lead in ministry?

Expectations of the Human Research Subject

_____ After my consent to participate in the study, I will complete an Intercessory Prayer Pre-Training Survey that will provide initial input for the project. Each week over twelve weeks, I will attend the prayer meetings, participate in the group discussions, and write prayer reflections and devotions in prayer journal. At the proposed time, I will complete an Intercessory Prayer Post-Training Survey that will provide data for the project.

Consent

_____ I agree to participate in this project as a human research subject. I understand that at any point in this project I can withdraw my participation without explanation. I understand that if I elect to withdraw my participation it will have no effect on my

membership or leadership responsibility at Canaan Baptist Church of Delaware. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation as a human research subject for this project.

Confidentiality

_____ I understand that this consent form, pre- and post- surveys and other collected data will be maintained and stored in strict compliance with confidentiality by Reverend Anita Michelle Coleman. All electronic data will be deleted, all prayer journals will be destroyed after the final examination of the dissertation.

Risks for Human Research Subjects

_____ I do not foresee any risks in taking part of this research. I understand that my responses will be covered in anonymity, and no one will be able to deduce from my responses my exact identity. If the Project Director chooses to use quotes from my feedback, it will be anonymous. My contributions to the study will be safeguarded from public view for the duration of the study.

Benefits of the Study

_____ I understand that the benefits of participating in this research would be to develop a better understanding and deeper relationship with Jesus and His Church through the ministry of prayer. Also, the participants of the prayer group will have opportunities each week to build relationships and nurture one another in the faith.

_____ I agree to join this study and I offer my participation voluntarily and without coercion.

Contact: I am aware that I can contact the researcher, Reverend Anita Coleman, for answers to questions related to this study directly at telephone: 484-433-0437 or via email at amcoleman1@united.edu.

I have read the contents of this consent form and I have received verbal explanations to all the questions I had and were answered to my satisfaction. I agree that by signing this consent form, I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree with the terms as a volunteer to participate in this study. Even though this consent form bears my signature, I understand I have the right to withdraw entirely without explanation and at any time.

Signature (Volunteer)

Date

Researcher Signature

Date

APPENDIX D

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND TRAINING SCHEDULE

Canaan Baptist Church
PROJECT TRAINING SCHEDULE



Project Overview and Schedule

Although this is set up to expand over six weeks, I have reduced this to four weeks using the schedule below to wrap this up by mid-August. I will do both morning and evening sessions for those who work during the day and need flexibility. You will receive a Zoom invite for the training the day before each scheduled session, and you can select which time is best for you.

Week 1:

Tuesday, July 20th @ 10:00 am – 11:30 am or 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Pre-Training Seminar via Zoom

Project Introduction, Context, Logistics, and Resources

Thursday, July 22nd @ 10:00 am – 11:30 am or 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Intercessory Prayer Training Lesson 1 via Zoom

- Principles to Live By “To Know and Obey God’s Will”
- Why Should We Pray?
- Prayer Focus: Intercede for the Church and Community

Prayer Group Meeting @ Canaan

Saturday, July 24th @ 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Week 2:

Tuesday, July 27th @ 10:00 am – 11:30 am or 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Intercessory Prayer Training Lesson 2 via Zoom

- Profession to Live For “To Be a Channel for God’s Love”
- What Should We Pray?
- Prayer Focus: Intercede for Leadership and Ministries

Thursday, July 29th @ 10:00 am – 11:30 am or 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Intercessory Prayer Training Lesson 3 via Zoom

- Purpose to Live Out “To Release God’s Love to Others”
- How Should We pray?
- Prayer Focus: Prayer of Intercession for the Needs of the Congregation

Prayer Group Meeting @ Canaan

Saturday, July 31 @ 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Week 3:

Tuesday, August 3rd @ 10:00 am – 11:30 am or 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Intercessory Prayer Training Lesson 4 via Zoom

- Presence to Live With “To Develop Intimacy with God”
- When Should We Pray?
- Prayer Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Divine Insight

Thursday, August 5th @ 10:00 am – 11:30 am or 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Intercessory Prayer Training Lesson 5 via Zoom

- Perseverance to Live Through “To Build Faith and Establish Authority”
- What Hinders Prayer?
- Prayer Focus: Prayer of Intercession Against Hindrances

Prayer Group Meeting @ Canaan
Saturday, August 7 @ 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Week 4:

Tuesday, August 10th @ 10:00 am – 11:30 am or 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Intercessory Prayer Training Lesson 6 via Zoom

- Power to Live On “To Be Empowered for Service”
- Who Helps Us To Pray?
- Prayer Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Revival

Thursday, August 12th @ 10:00 am – 11:00 am or 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Wrap Up / Project Conclusion

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT'S DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Survey

The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service

Name of Participant:

(Double Click Text Box to Enter First and Last Name)

Background Information About Yourself

(This is a fillable form. Double Click Boxes to Check Desired Selection)

1. Your Gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Race:

☐ Black ☐ White ☐ African
☐ Hispanic ☐ Jamaican ☐ Other

3. Your Age Group:

☐ 18 - 24
☐ 25 - 39
☐ 40 - 54
☐ 55 - Above

4. What is your highest level of education?

☐ High School ☐ Vocational
☐ College Degree ☐ Post-Graduate

5. Are you (check one):

☐ Retired ☐ Employed part-time
☐ Full-time "homemaker" or student ☐ Employed full-time

6. How many years have you lived in the general area of New Castle, Delaware?

☐ Less than five years
☐ 5-10 years
☐ 10-20 years
☐ 20 or more years
☐ Not Applicable, I travel to the area

7. How long have you been a member of Canaan Baptist Church of Delaware?

☐ Not a member
☐ One year or less

- ☐ 2-4 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11 or more years

8. How long does it usually take you to travel from home to church?

- ☐ 5 minutes or less ☐ 6-10 minutes
- ☐ 11-15 minutes ☐ 16-30 minutes
- ☐ 31-44 minutes ☐ 45 or more

9. What role(s) do you lead or serve at Canaan Baptist Church?

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Ministerial Staff ☐ Deacon's Ministry
- ☐ Men's Ministry ☐ Women's Ministry
- ☐ Marriage Ministry ☐ Christian Education Ministry
- ☐ Evangelism Ministry ☐ Music Ministry
- ☐ Ushers Ministry ☐ Missionary Ministry
- ☐ Other (specify)

10. If you are a leader for one or more ministries, please give the average size?

- ☐ Fewer than 25 people ☐ 121 to 250 people
- ☐ 26 to 75 people ☐ 251 to 500 people
- ☐ 76 to 120 people ☐ Not Applicable,

APPENDIX F
PRE- AND POST-TRAINING SURVEYS

Pre-Training Survey

The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service

The completed surveys will be used only for analytic research. Your name and answers to this survey will remain confidential and will not be exposed outside of the research.

Name of participant:

(Double Click Text Box to Enter First and Last Name)

☐ I have received, accepted, and signed the Human Subject Informed Consent Form and recognize that I have given my full consent to participate in this study.

Pre-Training Survey 1.0

| How much do you agree? With regards to intercessory prayer ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayer. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I believe that the ministry of intercessory prayer is important for my church, community and for my spiritual growth in ministry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I believe that intercessory prayer helps to reveal the will of God for my life and ministry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. When I am faced with ministry challenges, I immediately engage into prayer for God's to intervene. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I find a quiet place and time to pray daily for at least 30 minutes or more. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I feel closest to God when I pray. | | | | | |
| 7. I prefer to spend quiet time alone in prayer rather than praying within a group of people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Intercessory prayer enables me to lead with confidence through empowerment by the Holy Spirit. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 9. I often experience a burden to pray for others, my church, and my community. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I keep a prayer journal where I can see how God responds to my prayers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I feel healthier spiritually and more prepared to serve and lead in ministry when I pray. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I often experience answers to prayers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Pre-Training Survey 2.0

| How much do you agree...? When I pray ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I am very satisfied with my personal prayer life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I feel at peace in my overall relationship with God. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I feel more confident in talking to others about God. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I have courage to face the responsibilities of leading in ministry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I sense God's love deeply for me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I believe that I have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I feel my spiritual strength has increased. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I have a deepening desire to spend more time with God | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I have an intensified desire to do God's will. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I believe that God speaks to me as I pray. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I get helpful insights, visions, and revelation when I pray. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I feel more empowered to overcome temptations in my life when I pray. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Post-Training Survey

The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service

Name of participant:

(Double Click Text Box to Enter First and Last Name)

Post-Training Survey 1.0

(This is a fillable form. Double Click Boxes to Check Desired Selection)

| How much do you agree? With regards to my understanding of intercessory prayer ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I now have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayer. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I now believe that the ministry of intercessory prayer is important for my church, community and for my spiritual growth in ministry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I now believe that intercessory prayer helps to reveal the will of God for my life and ministry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Now, when I am faced with ministry challenges, I immediately engage into prayer for God's to intervene. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I now find a quiet place and time to pray daily for at least 30 minutes or more. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I now feel closer to God when I pray. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I now feel comfortable in praying within a group of people rather than alone. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Because of intercessory prayer, I now lead with confidence through the empowerment by the Holy Spirit. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I now experience a burden to pray for others, my church, and my community. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I now keep a prayer journal where I can see how God responds to my prayers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 11. I now feel healthier spiritually and more prepared to serve and lead in ministry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I now experience answers to prayers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Post-Training Survey 2.0

| How much do you agree...? Now when I pray ... | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I am now very satisfied with my personal prayer life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I now feel at peace in my overall relationship with God. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I now feel more confident in talking to others about God. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I now have courage to face the responsibilities of leading in ministry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I now sense God's love deeply for me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I now believe that I have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I now feel my spiritual strength has increased. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I now have a deepening desire to spend more time with God | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I now have an intensified desire to do God's will. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I now believe that God speaks to me as I pray. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I now get helpful insights, visions, and revelation when I pray. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I now feel more empowered to overcome temptations in my life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

APPENDIX G
TRAINING MANUAL SAMPLE CONTENT
WEEK 1 – LESSON 1

TRAINING MANUAL

Canaan Baptist Church INTERCESSORY PRAYER MINISTRY

IF MY PEOPLE *Pray*

2 Chron 7:14

An Intercessory Prayer Model for Ministry Leaders



CANAAN'S MISSION

An urban Baptist Church which serves as a vanguard of liberation faith and empowerment through our Christian witness. Canaan's mission is to do ministry for the Master through the five-fold ministries of Discipleship, Fellowship, Service, Worship and Evangelism.
Acts 2:42-47



Rev. Dr. Christopher Alan Bullock, Pastor
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Ph: (302)-654-8818

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*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face,
and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven,
and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

2 Chronicles 7:14

Preface

Pre-Training Seminar: Project Introduction, Context, Logistics, and Resources

Intercessory Prayer Training: A Biblical and Theological Perspective

Week 1 – Principles to Live By “To Know and Obey God’s Will”

Lesson 1: Why Should We Pray?

Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for the Church and Community

Week 2 – Profession to Live For “To Be a Channel for God’s Love”

Lesson 2: What Should We Pray?

Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Leadership and Ministries

Week 3 – Purpose to Live Out “To Release God’s Love to Others”

Lesson 3: How Should We pray?

Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for the Needs of the Congregation

Week 4 – Presence to Live With “To Develop Intimacy with God”

Lesson 4: When Should We Pray?

Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Divine Insight

Week 5 – Perseverance to Live Through “To Build Faith and Establish Authority”

Lesson 5: What Hinders Prayer?

Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession Against Hindrances

Week 6 – Power to Live On “To Be Empowered for Service”

Lesson 6: Who Helps Us To Pray?

Prayer Group Focus: Prayer of Intercession for Revival

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Zoom Participants Guidelines / Virtual Controls

Appendix 2: Places of Prayer

Appendix 3: Posture / Positions in Prayer

Appendix 4: List of Adoration and Praise for Prayer

Appendix 5: Recognize Your Authority in Christ

Appendix 6: Promises to Use in Prayer

Appendix 7: Canaan Baptist Church Ministries for Targeting Prayer

Appendix 8: Area Maps of Delaware for Strategic Prayer

PREFACE . . .

This research project, “The Development of an Intercessory Prayer Model that Empowers Ministry Leaders for Service,” sets out to address the problem that many churches do not have a ministry dedicated to prayer and many ministry leaders are not engaged in the spiritual discipline of praying daily which leads to complacency and burnout. The foundation of this training is set up structurally to position ministry leaders to then build on the significance of intercessory prayer as a source of empowerment for service.

From a biblical perspective, the Bible has many examples of biblical leaders receiving direct communication and divine assistance from God in fulfilling their assignments according to the will of God. The Old Testament Patriarchs and leaders like Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, David, Elijah, Daniel, and many others, for example were devoted to prayer and their narratives provide the significance of leading by hearing and obeying the voice of God through prayer. In the New Testament, Jesus ultimately became our Great Intercessor who demonstrated in his ministry the importance of listening to his Father through prayer, and so must we as followers of Jesus.

When we establish an understanding of the importance of prayer, develop the right attitude toward prayer, and understand how prayer fits into God’s divine plan for our lives as leaders, we would be empowered to serve in the kingdom of God. Ministry without prayer leads to religion without divine direction, work of the flesh, and complacent Christianity. “Religion belongs to the realm of human striving, of that which is made by human hands.”¹ – Karl Barth

Scriptures cited in this manual are taken from the
New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

¹ Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1995), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/linnbenton-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3053126>.

WEEK 1 – LESSON 1...

PRINCIPLES TO LIVE BY

“To Know and Obey God’s Will”

Prayer lays hold of God's plan and becomes the link between His will and its accomplishment on earth. Amazing things happen, and we are given the privilege of being the channels of the Holy Spirit's prayer.

– Elisabeth Elliot

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Lesson One | Why Should We Pray? |
| Key Scripture | Matthew 6-9-13 |
| Objective | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn the components of praying the Model prayer as Jesus taught. 2. Understand the importance of we prayer. 3. Unlock the power of prayer. 4. Experience practical application of praying God’s word. |
| Prayer Group Focus | Prayer of Intercession for the Church and Community. |

Lesson One Introduction:

We begin this training with answering the question, “why should we pray.” A straight-forward answer to this question is we pray because God instructs us to pray. Matthew 21:13-14 establishes that the new temple in Jesus is to be a house of prayer, alluding to the Spirit-filled church made possible through a community of believers who come to the temple for prayer. Furthermore, we seek and find God through prayer and the results experienced in a life of prayer develops into a love for God and others.

Key Scripture:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Matthew 6-9-13 | Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. |
|----------------|--|

Training Video Presentation

Do you want to know why we pray? Consider unpacking the petitions found in Matthew 6:9-13 where Jesus taught the disciples how to pray by. This 20-minute video

from The Prayer Course will answer this question why we pray and will unpack the petitions found in this prayer.

Watch Prayer Training Video: Why Pray?

Video Discussion Points:

1. Do you find it difficult to pray? Why or why not?
2. Based on the video, do you feel you can use the technique of “keeping it real; keeping it simple, keeping it up will help improve your discipline to pray more often?

Various Forms of Prayers:

The various forms of prayers add different meanings depending on the context. Nevertheless, the common thread of all prayers is that it is a form of spiritual communication with God, whether it is a yearning for God’s presence, a surrendering of oneself to God, a petition / request to God, seeking forgiveness, etc. Some examples listed below are not all-inclusive but mention to enhance your understanding on the varieties of prayer:

Petitions: When we make a request to God or ask Him to move or provide, we are engaging in petitionary prayers. This is not only one of the most common, but most prayers incorporate a petition for God to do something. A good example of supplications is 1 Samuel 1:11 where Hanna asked God to give her a son.

Adoration: This should be done first when we approach God in prayer as it positions us to a posture of humility. When we tell God how much we adore Him, how much He is worthy, and how much we honor Him, it puts us in the spirit of worship and brings us into the presence of God.

Confession: When we approach God in prayer, we are required to pray in spirit and truth. Confession specifically speaks of a conscious acknowledgment of sin and accepting God’s forgiveness when we repent. 1 John 1:9 says, “if we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins.

Forgiveness: Normally, after confession follows asking God for forgiveness. Asking for forgiveness also includes having a forgiving heart. Matthew 5:14-15 notes that, “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Theological Foundation:

Expressions of prayer exist throughout the Old and New Testaments. The first biblical recording of prayer is in Genesis 4:26, which notes the people began to call on the name of the Lord after the birth of Enosh.² Jesus lived a life of prayer maintaining, constant communication with his Father. The Bible identifies many reasons why we should pray as follows:

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Kings 18:36-38 | We need divine intervention |
| Matt. 26:41 | We need to avoid temptation. |
| Luke 11:13 | We need to receive the Holy Spirit. |
| John 16:24 | We need to have fullness of joy. |
| Acts 4:31 | We need for empowerment to witness. |
| Rom. 10:13 | We need Salvation. |

Wrap It Up:

We can see in the word of God, that we are commanded to pray, “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6). Most important, prayer introduces an understanding of the things of God, and it is one of the main tasks of Christian responsibility.

Devotional Homework Assignment:

1. *Prayer of Jabez Devotional*: Read Pages 5-8 “Invitation: Preparing for the Jabez Miracle”
2. *Journal Reflection*: After the devotional reading, reflect and write what comes to mind as you read the daily devotions.
3. “*Why Should We Pray*”: Read Psalm 65:2 and Luke 11:13.
Based on what you have learned this week and reflecting on these scriptures, what is God saying to you on why we need to pray?
4. Engage in prayer throughout the week and journal your experience.

² J. G. Millar, *Calling on the Name of the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Prayer* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 20.

WEEK 1 - PRAYER GROUP FOCUS...

“Again, here is what I tell you. Suppose two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for. My Father in heaven will do it for you. Where two or three people gather in my name, I am there with them.”

Matthew 18:19-20

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Welcome | Prayer Group Leader |
| Scripture Reading | Romans 8:37-39 |
| Worship | Enter His Courts with Adoration, Worship, Praise, and Thanksgiving |
| Opening Prayer | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite the Holy Spirit 2. Pray for Participant's 3. Pray for Pastor, First Family, and Canaan Leadership Team |
| Focused Intercession | For the church and communities. |

Prayer Group Meeting Organization:

- Assemble into two small groups for group intercession and assign a designated captain for the group.
- Use the Four Steps to Intercession below to intercede for the noted targeted area for this week. Consider using the prayer tools found in the Appendix of your training manual.
- Groups will intercede separately for 30 minutes and return together for closing remarks and closing prayer.
- Meeting will adjourn at the top of the hour.

Practical Application of Intercession:

1. *Get Informed:*
 - Intercede for Canaan Baptist Church of New Castle, Delaware and surrounding communities of Delaware targeting specific needs of Canaan to continue to be a light to the community. Target your prayers to what you know are the problem areas that need divine intervention. Refer to Appendix 8 for area maps to target your prayers to specific counties, neighborhoods, and authorities.
2. *Get Inspired:*
 - Intercede for the will of God for Canaan and for the area of New Castle, Delaware by inviting the Holy Spirit to help you clearly identify what God wants for Canaan and for New Castle, Delaware. Be attentive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Share with the group and later write down what you heard.

3. *Get Indignant:*

- Once God has revealed His will, go into warfare prayer, if necessary, and take authority to speak to the situation, declare it victory, and release it. The Holy Spirit will join you as you pray. If you need to move into the Spirit realm, allow the Holy Spirit to lead you.

4. *Get In Synch:*

- If you have a revelation, bring it out vocally for your group to hear and then agree in prayer as a group to intercede. You can do this one at a time or together as the Holy Spirit leads.

Remarks / Experience:

Identify any specific prayer needs as a result of intercession. Share with the entire group what God is saying and what God has revealed. Identify any praise reports and breakthroughs. Be sure to write down what was revealed to you and continue in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

Closing Prayer:

Close in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads!

APPENDIX H

**RESEARCH PROJECT PRAYER JOURNAL INTRODUCTION AND WEEK 1
ASSIGNMENT**

IF MY PEOPLE *Pray*

2 Chron. 7:14

An Intercessory Prayer Research Model for Ministry Leaders

Researcher: Rev. Anita Michelle Coleman

RESEARCH PROJECT PRAYER JOURNAL

Participant's Unique Identifier

Participant Disclaimer

To protect your privacy, please only use this journal as directed by the researcher. As participants in this study, you accept and understand that these journals are exclusively for the purpose of the study and that they will be collected at the end of the study for analysis. The journals will identify how well you captured the training methods for the practical disciplines of intercessory prayer and what God was saying as a result of your prayers.

~ CONFIDENTIAL ~



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Practical Disciplines of Intercessory Prayer

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 13:20-21

The practical discipline of intercessory prayer is simply *worship*. We worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Thus, intercessory prayer requires a place for worship, a position in worship, songs of worship, a mindset to worship, and a Spirit of worship. Therefore, it is extremely important to set aside adequate time to prepare spiritually for the discipline of worship through intercessory prayer.

Place for Worship: Find a quiet place where you can be consecrated from potential distractions. Refer to your training manual for potential places of prayer. See Appendix 2-Places of Prayer.

Position in Worship: There are various positions in prayer, and you may use several positions during the course of a single prayer sessions. Refer to your training manual for the various positions of prayer. See Appendix 3-Posture/Positions in Prayer.

Songs of Worship: To help blot out the noise of your mind, find a few worship songs that speak to you spiritually allowing you to relax, be still, and quiet before the Lord as you worship. Instrumental Christian worship songs is a good place to start.

Mindset to Worship: Clutter! This happens when we let all kinds of things cloud our minds creating noise, anxieties, uneasiness that keeps us from hearing what God. Using the songs of worship and the spirit of worship will help prepare you with a mindset to worship.

A Spirit of Worship: In Spirit and truth means that we humble ourselves before God in adoration and praise of know who God is and what He has done for us. Always do a self-examination to approach God asking for forgiveness of the things that may weigh you down. Invite the Holy Spirit to help you prepare spiritually for the worship of intercessory prayer.

The Sword of Worship: God speaks to us in various ways and the most common way that God speaks to us is through His word. Consult your Bible to devotionally read a few scriptures on the promises of God. You may select the categories that best fits your state of mind at the time and just read them out loud a few times. Refer to Appendix 6-Promises to Use in Prayer.

How To Use This Journal

This research project prayer journal is to be used alongside your training manual as a tool to help guide you in the practical application of intercessory prayer. The guided prayers are according to the lesson plan defined for the week. Use the outline provided for each week for entering your responses, reflections, and observations. Do not forget to always invite the Holy Spirit to guide you through the lessons in adapting to the techniques found in the spiritual disciplines of intercessory prayer.

Listed below are the four practical steps¹ to intercession that will guide you in developing the spiritual discipline of praying Christ-like, Spirit-centered, and faith-driven prayers. We will practice these steps during the Prayer Group meetings over the six-week study. The practical steps are:

1. *Get Informed*: This is targeting prayers by gathering data and getting facts about who, where, and what you are praying for such as news, prayer requests, area maps. Refer to Appendix 8 for area maps.
2. *Get Inspired*: Seek the will of God for targeting your prayers by inviting the Holy Spirit to assist you in interceding. Refer to Appendix 6 for inspiration on God's promises.
3. *Get Indignant*: Take authority over the situation. Refer to Appendix 5 as a resource to pray God's word.
4. *Get In Synch*: Pray in agreement with one another. You do this by joining together with one or more in a group and vocally agreeing how to pray.

“O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.”

Psalm 50:17

¹ 24-7 Prayer, “Session 4: Intercession,” The Prayer Course, <https://prayercourse.org/session/intercession/>.

Week 1 – Principles to Live By “To Know and Obey God’s Will”

Lesson 1 Reflections: Why Should We Pray?

Training Video “Why Pray?”: The Prayer Course Reflections Points:

[illegible]

[illegible]

APPENDIX I
PARTICIPANT'S FINAL EVALUATION

PARTICIPANT'S FINAL EVALUATION

1. Do you feel you have become more acquainted with God? In what way(s)?

2. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the intercessory prayer group on the ministry you lead and/or serve at Canaan Baptist Church? For example, the Evangelism Ministry, Christian Education Ministry, Health ministry, the Usher Ministry, etc.

3. In what ways do you think this intercessory prayer group has either strengthened or empowered you in the ministries you lead?

4. What do you think are the major strengths and/or weaknesses of this intercessory prayer model?

5. Do you think having an intercessory prayer ministry at Canaan Baptist Church is vital to enhance the spiritual climate of the church?

6. Would you like to continue being a part of a prayer ministry at Canaan Baptist Church? Explain your answer or concerns.

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